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CRITICAL MASS?
DETAILS INSIDE!
PLUS:
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FIGHTING AMERICAN!™
INTERFACE! MONSTER MASTERWORKS! STEEL-TOWN ROCKERS AND MORE!

STAN LEE PRESENTS MARVEL AGE®

SALICRUP'S SECTION

Recently, New York City's tabloid headlines screamed all about the grisly murders of a young dancer by a sicko who thought he was **Jesus Christ**. I'll spare you all the gory details—something the papers didn't spare me—and get right to the point: Not a single word was published in any paper covering this story that suggested or even hinted that the Bible be banned.

I'll let you digest that for a moment.

Okay, I'm back. Now, don't for a second think that I seriously think the Bible should be banned—I don't. I'm completely against censorship. But let's pretend for a moment that this psycho didn't imagine he was Jesus Christ, but the **Amazing Spider-Man**. Do you think no one would either hint or suggest we should take a good hard look at the "funny books" our children are reading. I don't think so.

I truly wish everyone who immediately thought that to ban the Bible because that sicko claimed to be Jesus, was a stupid, ill-considered idea would have the same reaction the next time someone comes up with the bright idea to censor comics. 'Nuff said?

On a somewhat less shrill note, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the latest and greatest MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE assistant editor to Marveldom Assembled. So let's all put our hands together and give a warm Marvel Age welcome to **Bombastic Barry Dutter**! (Not too loud now, we don't want Mr. D. to get a swelled head!) You may recognize Barry's name from his many by-lines both here in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE as well as *The Comics Buyer's Guide*.

Big things are being planned for MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE in 1990, and we're glad Barry's going to be here to be part of it. And of course, you'd better be here too, or it just won't be any fun!

And speaking of you being here, I'm afraid I've got some good news and some bad news. The good news is that starting in January MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE will be at newsstands everywhere—not just Direct Sales outlets! The bad news is that our price will finally increase to a buck—but, hey, that's just about the price of most regular 32-page comics these days anyway! I strongly suggest that you consider subscribing to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE right now to avoid the price increase. Just use the handy, dandy subscription coupon found on the last page of most of Marvel's comics. You'll be glad you did!

NEXT ISSUE: The results of the first NO-CONTEST! And much, much more!

—Jim Salicrup

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MARVEL® COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic, and Marvel U.K. titles shipping in **November.**

Titles Shipping November 7
On Sale November 28

☐ **AVENGERS WEST COAST** #54—An Acts of Vengeance saga! Looking for a fight—how does **Mole Man**'s monsters versus the **West Coast Avengers** and the trashing of Los Angeles grab you? Written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Mike Machlan**. $1.00.

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA** #366—Two Acts of Vengeance tales! To free the **Sub-Mariner, Captain America** must succeed where everyone else has failed—he must defeat the **Controller**! Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Kieron Dwyer**, and inked by **Danny Bulandi**. Plus: The **Cobra**'s first solo tale—to prove to himself that he's worthy of leading the **Serpent Society, Cobra** has to face his biggest fear—**Mr. Hyde**! Written by **Mark Gruenwald** and drawn by **Mark Bright**. $1.00.

☐ **WHAT THE—?** #6—Marvel's riotous satirical series pokes fun at the Acts of Vengeance saga with "Smacks of Vengeance" written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Terry Austin**; reveals the wild and woolly wackiness of the Great White North in "Alpha Splat" written by **Marcus McLaurin** and drawn by **Don Hudson**; boldly goes where others were too smart to go and reveals the "Pulverizer's Origin" written and penciled by **Hilary Barta**, and inked by **Doug Rice**; and gets down and dirty with some slimy "Swamp Monsters" written by **Peter Gillis**, penciled by **Hilary Barta**, and inked by **Doug Rice**. 32 pages. $1.00.

☐ **THE PUNISHER MAGAZINE** #6—Re-presenting from **THE PUNISHER** #5, the climax to the two-part cult saga, "Ministry of Death," written by **Mike Baron** and drawn by **Klaus Janson**, and from **THE PUNISHER** #6, a tale of international mob crime and terrorism, "Garbage," written by **Mike Baron**, penciled by **David Ross**, and inked by **Kevin Nowlan**. New cover painting by **Joe Jusko**. A Marvel black and white magazine. 64 pages. Mando offset paper. $2.25.

☐ **THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #257—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! Will **Psylocke** succumb to the **Mandarin's** power and embrace him as his consort and weapon of vengeance? Does **Wolverine** finally find the lost **X-Men**? The answers make this one of the most suspense-filled **X-MEN** sagas of the season! Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Jim Lee**, and inked by **Scott Williams**. $1.00.

☐ **THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK** #11 — **She-Hulk** teams up with **Lex Loopner** of DC to fight his arch nemesis: **Pseudoman**—the anti-hero **Lex** created through his science of pseudonics. Written by **Steve Gerber**, penciled by **Brian Hitch** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **CRITICAL MASS** Limited Series #1—The Shadowline Saga continues! The bad news is that **Clerk's** sanity is restored. The devastating news is that he's launching his plan to annihilate all of North America! If you think **Dr. Zero's** facing his greatest challenge, you're only half right! Written by **D.G. Chichester** and **Margaret Clark**, penciled by **Kevin O'Neill**, and inked by **Bill Sienkiewicz**.

The **Powerline** duo has sworn vengeance against **Dirk Ravenscore**—and now they're going to get it! Written by **D.G. Chichester** and **Margaret Clark** and drawn by **Gray Morrow**.

Plus a haunting tale of **St. George** written by **D.G. Chichester** and **Margaret Clark** and drawn by **Klaus Janson**. An Epic Graphic Album. 64 pages. Direct Sales only. $4.95.

☐ **DAREDEVIL** #276—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! It's one of the most desperate battles of the month! To save the life of **Number 9, Daredevil, Karnak, and Gorgon** must defeat and destroy one of the most powerful villains in the Acts of Vengeance saga—**Ultron**! Written by **Ann Nocenti**, penciled by **John Romita Jr.**, and inked by **Al Williamson**. $1.00.

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** #60—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! Even after **Dr. Doom** *doubles* **Goliath**'s size and strength, the **Captain Universe**-enhanced **Spider-Man**'s biggest fear is not if he can defeat the the giant—but if he does it by killing **Goliath**! Written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Alex Saviuk**, and inked by **Keith Williams**. $1.00.

Titles shipping November 14
On Sale December 5

☐ **ALF** #25—It's a special 25th issue anniversary! **ALF** recalls his past with the **Tanners** and almost destroys his future! Sounds wild? Seeing how it happens is even more fun! Written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Dave Manak**, and inked by **Marie Severin**. $1.00.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #328—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! **Sebastian Shaw** is sent to deal with **Spider-Man** who still has the **Captain Universe** powers. Being no fool, **Shaw** hires the **Hulk** to knock out **Spidey**.It's an awesome battle you must not miss! Written by **David Michelinie** and drawn by **Todd McFarlane**. $1.00.

☐ **AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT** #28—Two Acts of Vengeance tales! **Hawkeye** and **Mockingbird** better get some earplugs because they're about to face the master and mistress of noise, **Angar the Screamer** and the mind-blasting **Screaming Mimi**! Written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Al Milgrom**, and inked by **Don Heck**. Plus: **Iron Man** vs. the **Mad Thinker**! Written by **Dwayne McDuffie** penciled by **Dwayne Turner** and inked by **Chris Ivy**. $1.00.

☐ **HEATHCLIFF** #43—In a special holiday treat, the **HEATHCLIFF** gang offer a zany retelling of Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" with **Heathcliff** as the screwiest of Scrooges! Written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Warren Kremer**, and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. $1.00.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS** #85—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! **Hela** has decreed that **Odin** must die! **Dani** is **Hela**'s willing servant for the deicide! The **New Mutants** must stop their friend! But if they succeed, the consequences could destroy **Dani**! Meanwhile on Earth, **Rusty** suffers the consequences of the **Vulture**'s prison escape! Written by **Louise Simonson** and penciled by **Geoff Isherwood**. $1.00.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT** #80—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in!

Scorpion, **Nekra**, **Owl**, and **Asp** thought they were onto a good thing when they tried to sneak into Canada. Then they ran into **Alpha Flight**. But what turns the situation into a real free-for-all is the arrival of **Gamma Flight**—who are there to arrest **Alpha Flight**! Written by **James D. Hudnall**, penciled by **John Calimee**, and inked by **Mike Manley**. 32 pages. Mando offset paper. $1.50.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.
A **Graphic Novel** is an 8 1/2" x 11" paperback edition.
A **Trade Paperback** is a 7" x 10" paperback edition.
A **Graphic Album** is a 6 5/8" x 10" high quality, square-bound edition.
A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets.
Shipping Date refers to when a comic leaves the printer.

☐ **WOLVERINE** #20—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in!

Wolverine's search for **Roughouse** has led him to the Central American nation of Tierra Verde. And into some trouble that even he might not survive! Written by **Archie Goodwin**, penciled by **John Byrne**, and inked by **Klaus Janson**. 32 pages. Mando offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **SLEEZE BROTHERS** #5—Theft, blackmail, and a wild chase in the worst sewers in the city turn this tale of the **Sleeze Brothers** into a real stinker! But then the **Sleeze Brothers** wouldn't have it any other way—they're too stupid to know better! Written by **John Carnell**, penciled by **Andy Lanning**, and inked by **Stephen Baskerville**. A Marvel U.K. comic. Direct Sales only. $1.75.

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #169—In a special epilog to the awesome "**Conan** in the New World" trilogy, **Conan** returns to Aquilonia to reclaim his throne. But his absence has made his enemies powerful enough to stop him. "Brothers of the Skull" is written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Mike Docherty**, and inked by **Ernie Chan**. Plus: **King Kull** has a difference of opinion with the owner of gambling casino in "Death and Taxes" written and drawn by **Dave Simons**. Also, the **Robert E. Howard** Hero Portfolio by **James Fletcher**. 64 pages. Mando offset paper. $2.25.

☐ **NTH MAN** #8—So you thought you knew all there was to know about **Alfie O'Meagan**, did you? Did you know he also dreamed of becoming **Dr. Doom**? Did you know that he now succeeds in becoming **Dr. Doom**? Not only that, but he's turned the **Nth Man** into **Daredevil**! And the fight they have is just one of the shocking scenes that climax in the destruction of their childhood home—the orphanage! Written and penciled by **Larry Hama** and inked by **Fred Fredricks**. $1.00.

☐ **QUASAR** #6—An Acts of Vengeance bonanza! The **Energy Avenger** against **Venom**! **Klaw**! The **Living Laser**! The **Red Ghost**! And when the battle takes him to the **Watcher**'s house, a certain omniscient man on the moon is not what you call pleased. Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Ryan**, and inked by **Danny Bulandi**. $1.00.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER** #61—**Groo** meets up with a band of horse thieves and proves that he's more dangerous on horseback than he is on the ground! Written and drawn by **Sergio Aragones** with kudos by **Mark Evanier**. An Epic Comic. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS** #41—Four tales of super-heroic action featuring **Wolverine**, **Wonder-Man**, **Hercules**, and **Freedom Force**!

WOLVERINE Part IV—The trail of the **White Shadow** leads **Wolverine** into China. . .and a rendezvous with death! Written by **Marv Wolfman** and penciled by **John Buscema**.

WONDER-MAN Part IV—Hey, aren't **Wonder-Man** and **Iron Man** supposed to be friends? Then why are they trying to knock each other's blocks off? Written by **Michael Higgins**, penciled by **Javier Saltares**, and inked by **Jose Marzan**.

HERCULES Part III—It's the horrifying conclusion! And the ending will leave **Hercules** scarred for life! Written and drawn by **Bob Layton**.

Plus complete in this issue: **Freedom Force** reluctantly attempts to rescue their most hated adversary! Wait'll you see why! Written by **Scott Lobdell**, penciled by **Dave Cockrum**, and inked by **Bruce Patterson**. 32 pages. Biweekly. $1.25.

☐ **ELECTRIC UNDERTOW** Limited Series #3—Dr. **Toulema** was the man who gave the **Morituri** their powers. So why do the **Morituri** have to find and kill him? Written by **James D. Hudnall**, penciled by **Mark Bagley**, and inked by **Carlos Garzon**. An Epic Graphic Album. 48 pages. Direct Sales only. $3.95.

☐ **CLOAK AND DAGGER AND POWER PACK** Graphic Novel—An unforgettable tale of tragedy. . .and hope. Trying to find a better life, teenage runaways instead fall victim to the dangers of New York City street life. **Dagger** herself has become a victim of another sort. And **Cloak** and **Power Pack** find themselves embarking on a desperate search that will pit them against some of the most brutal menaces in New York City! Written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Sal Velluto**, and inked by **Mark Farmer**. 64 pages. $7.95.

Titles Shipping November 21 On Sale December 12

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #84—Exclusive articles on **John Byrne**'s new **SUB-MARINER** series and **ROBO-COP**! Plus another glimpse into the future of Marvel comics with Marvel A to Z. And don't forget the Mutant report, Coming Attractions, **Stan**'s Soapbox, **Mark**'s Remarks, **Hembeck**'s Page, the Marvel Trivia Quiz, and all our other regular features. 75¢.

☐ **THE AVENGERS** #313—An Acts of Vengeance saga!

The **Avengers** take on the villains who started it all! That's right—it's an all out battle between the **Avengers** and **Mandarin**, **Magneto**, **Dr. Doom**, **Kingpin**, the **Red Skull** and the **Wizard**! Written by **John Byrne**, penciled by **Paul Ryan**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL TALES** #233—Re-presenting from **X-MEN** #35 the classic first meeting between **Spider-Man** and the original **X-Men**! **Written by Roy Thomas**, penciled by **Werner Roth**, and inked by **Dan Adkins**. Plus an all new adventure of **Petey—Peter Parker** before he became **Spider-Man**! Written and drawn by **Fred Hembeck**. Cover drawn by **Todd McFarlane**. $1.00.

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** #228—Politics is a tough profession, especially in the Hyborean Age. But what **Conan** discovers is a political situation in a remote city that turns even his blood cold! "Red Teeth" is the first part of a horror-drenched two-part tale written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Jose Delbo**, and inked by **Alfredo Alcala**. $1.00.

☐ **THE PUNISHER** #29—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in!

The Punisher's in Latveria, he fights his way through one heck of a donnybrook with **Kristoff**, and when that's over he finds himself facing **Dr. Doom**! Written by **Mike Baron** and penciled by **Bill Reinhold**. $1.00.

☐ **G.I. JOE** #96—It's the final chapter of the incredible **Snake-Eyes** trilogy! More secrets of **Snake-Eyes**' past revealed! And the climax has one of the greatest shoot-outs in **G.I. Joe** history! Written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Mark Bright**, and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. $1.00.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK** #365—"Countdown" Part II! To find a cure for the poison slowly killing him, the **Hulk** tries to get help from **Reed Richards**. But when he finally finds **Reed**, who's giving a lecture in Phoenix, the **Hulk** finds himself caught in another life and death battle—against **Ben Grimm** and the fighting mad **Ms. Marvel**! Written by **Peter David**, penciled by **Jeff Purves**, and inked by **Marie Severin**. Cover drawn by **Walt Simonson**. $1.00.

☐ **SILVER SURFER** #33—The **Impossible Man** literally runs into the **Silver Surfer.** Next thing you know, the **Impossible Man** is making life miserable for the **Silver Surfer.** Then someone who was chasing the **Impossible Man** shows up—and that's when the trouble really starts! Written by **Jim Valentino**, penciled by **Ron Lim**, and inked by **Tom Christopher**. $1.00.

☐ **WHAT IF—?** #9—In one of the most gripping **WHAT IF—?** sagas yet, discover what would have happened to the **Punisher** if his family had not been killed in Central Park! Written by **Doug Murray**, penciled by **Rik Levins**, and inked by **Bob McLeod**. Cover by **Mike Zeck**. 32 pages. $1.25.

☐ **EXCALIBUR** #18—The **Excalibur** team finds itself on an earth that's trapped in the 1950s. It's a galactic off-ramp for a celestial "American Graffiti" written by **Chris Claremont** and penciled by **Dennis Jensen**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **SHIELD** #7—You'd think that with the menace of the **Death's Head Guard** finally resolved, **Nick** could go back to the life he wants to lead. Well, **Leviathan** and the **Coven** are about to change **Nick**'s plans forever! Guest-written by **D.G. Chichester**, penciled by **Keith Pollard**, and inked by **Kim DeMulder**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **POLICE ACADEMY** #5—It's super hero time for the **Police Academy** crew. **Sweetchuck**'s got it into his head that he's really **Fleaboy**—the sidekick to the famous super hero of comics and TV, the **Grasshopper**! And the **Police Academy** guys and gals risk life and limb—and a lot of other things—trying to save **Sweetchuck**! The madcap fun is brought to you by writer **Angelo DeCesare**, penciler **Howard Post**, and inker **Jacqueline Roettcher**. $1.00.

☐ **THE DESTROYER** #4—**Remo** faces a real challenge here! Both he and his sensei, **Chiun**, have to stop a 7'6" blue "hulk" before he destroys the city he's in. But that danger is nothing compared to what that "hulk" plans to do with the women! Written by **Will Murray** and penciled by **Tom Morgan**. A Marvel Black and White magazine. 48 pages. $2.25.

☐ **CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: MARSHALL LAW TAKES MANHATTAN** #1—The only man who can keep renegade super heroes in line is back in a special one-shot adventure! **Law** is on the trail of the murderous **Persecutor**. The trail leads to the super hero asylum in New York City. And what he finds there is danger in the form of some disturbingly familiar super-heroes! Written by **Pat Mills**, penciled by **Kevin O'Neill**, inked by **Mark Nelson**, and color by **Mark Chiarello**. An Epic Graphic Album. 48 pages. Direct Sales only. For Mature Readers. $4.95.

☐ **LIEUTENANT BLUEBERRY: ANGEL FACE** Graphic Novel—Framed for the attempted murder of **President Grant**, **Lieutenant Blueberry** becomes the object of a relentless manhunt. Before it's over, **Lieutenant Blueberry** will have faced and fought lawmen, bounty hunters, and the cold-blooded assassin with the **Angel Face**! Written by **Jean-Michel Charlier** and drawn by **Moebius**. An Epic Graphic Novel. 96 pages. Direct Sales only. $12.95.

☐ **FIGHTING AMERICAN**—**Simon** and **Kirby**'s classic super hero! *All* the adventures of the awesome **Fighting American** are here in one rip-roaring volume! When the Cold War was its hottest, when the communist takeover of America seemed imminent, when the free world needed a champion, the **Fighting American** responded! Thrill to some of the most exciting adventures of the 1950s as the **Fighting American** takes on **Invisible Irving**, **Round Robin**, **Super Khakalovitch** and more! Written by **Joe Simon** and drawn by **Jack Kirby**. A Marvel hardcover. 196 pages. $35.95.

Titles Shipping November 28 On Sale December 19

☐ **COUNT DUCKULA** #9—At last **Igor** gets his wish! **Count Duckula** becomes an evil vampire! It's a wish that **Igor** might very quickly come to regret! Written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Warren Kremer**, and inked by **Bill Sienkiewicz**. $1.00.

☐ **DAMAGE CONTROL II** #3 Limited Series—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! The destruction caused by the Acts of Vengeance has created a huge demand for **Damage Control**'s services. Trouble is, the work force is on strike! And when the **She-Hulk** steps in to help, she winds up starting a riot! Written by **Dwayne McDuffie**, penciled by **Ernie Colon**, and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. $1.00.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR** #336—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! The **Fantastic Four** versus the **Super Adaptoid**! And it's a blockbuster of a battle! Written by **Walt Simonson**, penciled by **Rich Buckler**, and inked by **Romeo Tanghal**. $1.00.

☐ **THOR** #413—It's a suspense filled saga as **Dr. Strange** performs a dangerous exorcism on **Thor** to discover the reason behind **Thor**'s chronic weak spells. Written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz**, and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. Plus in the conclusion of the three-part **Beta-Ray Bill** saga, **Beta Ray Bill** takes on incredible odds to save slaves whose psychic power fuels a pirate spaceship. Written by **Tom DeFalco** and drawn by **Ron Lim**. $1.00.

☐ **THE TRANSFORMERS** #62—The **Transformer** who possesses the all-powerful creation matrix can become the ultimate **Transformer**! And in this, the opening chapter of the incredible Matrix Quest saga, **Decepticons** and **Autobots** embark on the greatest search of their lives. To the winner goes the power to reshape the universe! To the loser—oblivion! Written by **Simon Furman**, with art by **Geoff Senior**. $1.00.

☐ **X-FACTOR** #50—It's a giant-sized 50th-issue anniversary adventure! The galaxy spanning Judgment War reaches a shattering climax! Is it **X-Factor**'s finest hour—or the moment of it's most devastating defeat? To make matters even more frantic, what's happening to **Jean Grey**? Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Paul Smith**, and inked by **Al Milgrom**. 48 pages. $1.50.

☐ **THE 'NAM** #40—A special farewell to **Sergeant Crews** in his last issue as he recounts a tale of the Dong River in which a love of music almost kills an entire boat crew. Plus: An appearance by **Richard M. Nixon**. Written by **Doug Murray** and drawn by **Pepe Moreno**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

☐ **POWER PACK** #53—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! The **Power Pack**'s powers have switched. They better get used to using them quick, because they find themselves up against **Typhoid Mary**! Written and inked by **Terry Austin** and penciled by **Ernie Colon**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL** #14—It's the team-up you demanded—the **Punisher** and **Spider-Man**! And to make things even wilder, Spidey's got the **Captain Universe** powers! Wait'll you see why they have to band together! Written by **Carl Potts**, penciled by **Dave Ross**, and inked by **Chris Ivy**. 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **IRON MAN** #252—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! **Iron Man**'s really in trouble now! The core group of super-villains have put **Chemistro** on his trail. And it's going to take all the high-tech wizardry of his armor—and then some—for **Iron Man** to get out of the fight alive! Written by **Dwayne McDuffie** and penciled by **Herb Trimpe**. $1.00.

☐ **THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN** #160—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! **Dr. Doom** resurrects the adamantium-laced robot **Tess-One**, and after modifying it, sends it to wreak havok in Manhattan. But when **Spider-Man** goes to save the city, will he be hailed as a hero, or as a danger that should be controlled—or eliminated! Written by **Gerry Conway**, penciled by **Sal Buscema**, and inked by **Mike Esposito**. $1.00.

☐ **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS** #42—**Wolverine, Wonder-Man, Union Jack,** and the **Daughters of the Dragon** in four new adventures!

WOLVERINE Part V—It's a job that just might be too much even for **Wolverine**! He's got to protect a remote Chinese village from both the **Black Shadow** and the even more menacing **White Shadow**! Written by **Marv Wolfman** and penciled by **John Buscema.**

WONDER MAN Part V—Look out, **Wasp! Wonder Man**'s impersonating **Hank Pym** so he can regroup the **Avengers**! And the chaos that results is exactly what the **Enchantress** wants! Written by **Michael Higgins,** penciled by **Javier Saltares,** and inked by **Jose Marzan.**

Plus complete in this issue:

Union Jack became one of the greatest heroes of Great Britain. And now it can be told—the awesome reason why he became a super hero! Written by **Fabian Nicieza** and penciled by **Kieron Dwyer.**

The circus is in town and that suits the deadly **Daughters of the Dragon** just fine! But a night of entertainment turns into a night of deadly danger! Written by **Jo Duffy,** penciled by **Chris Tsuda,** and inked by **Dan Adkins.** 32 pages. Biweekly. $1.25.

☐ **DR. STRANGE** #13—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! It's a fight filled with fireworks when **Arkon the Magnificent** attacks **Dr. Strange**! Written by **Roy** and **Dann Thomas** and drawn by **Jackson Guice.** Plus another chapter in the evil history of Darkhold! Written by **R.J.M. Lofficier** and **Roy Thomas** and drawn by **Dan Day.** 32 pages. Mando offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **MOON KNIGHT** #10—An Acts of Vengeance tie-in! Talk about tough situations, **Moon Knight** is trapped by **Killer Shrike, Coach Whip** and the new **Ringer.** As for escapes, it looks like the only way for **Moon Knight** is feet first! Written by **Charles Dixon,** penciled by **Sal Velluto,** and inked by **Mark Farmer.** 32 pages. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

☐ **CLASSIC X-MEN** #43—It's a special giant-sized spectacular! Re-presenting from **THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #137, one of the the greatest tales of the Marvel Universe—the Death of **Phoenix**! Co-Plotted and scripted by **Chris Claremont,** co-plotted and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Terry Austin.** Plus: **Chris Claremont** writes an all new tale that reveals more on **Jean Grey** and **Phoenix!** Penciled by **Bryan Hitch.** 48 pages. $1.75.

☐ **CONAN SAGA** #34—Re-presenting from **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #31 the gripping tale of treachery and death in the middle of ancient ruins tainted by unspeakable evil. "The Flame Knife" is written **Roy Thomas,** penciled by **John Buscema,** and inked by **Tony DeZuniga.** And from **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #2 "The Beast from the Abyss" a tale of King Kull written by **Steve Englehart** and drawn by **Howard Chaykin.** A Marvel black and white magazine. 48 pages. For Mature Readers. $2.25.

☐ **AKIRA** #15—The struggle over who will control the paranormal child **Akira** continues as **Mr. Nezu** refuses to surrender **Akira** to **Lady Miyako. Kay, Kaneda,** and **Chiyoko** help try to regain **Akira,** while the **Colonel** fanatically searches for **Akira,** hoping to find him before he wakes up. Written and drawn by **Katsuhiro Otomo,** English language translation by **Jo Duffy,** and computer coloring by **Steve Oliff.** An Epic Squarebound book. 64 pages. Direct Sales only. $3.50.

☐ **MARVEL MASTERWORKS** #11: THE UNCANNY X-MEN—Representing the first appearance of the new X-Men from **THE UNCANNY X-MEN** #94-100 and **GIANT SIZE X-MEN** #1! Thrill again to the exploits of **Wolverine, Storm, Nightcrawler, Colossus, Cyclops, Professor X,** and the rest as they face **Krakoa the Living Island, Count Nefaria, Eric the Red,** the **Sentinels** and more! Written by **Len Wein** and **Chris Claremont,** penciled by **Dave Cockrum,** and inked by **Sam Grainger** and others. A Marvel hardcover. 192 pages. $29.95.

SUPER-VILLAIN® CHECKLIST

Angar—AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT #28
Arkon—DR. STRANGE #13
Asp—ALPHA FLIGHT #80
Black Shadow—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #s 41 and 42
Cadaver—CLOAK AND DAGGER/ POWER PACK Graphic Novel
Chemistro—IRON MAN #252
Coach Whip—MOON KNIGHT #10
Controller—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #41
Coven—SHIELD #7
Crossbones—CAPTAIN AMERICA #366
Dark Phoenix—CLASSIC X-MEN #43
Dr. Doom—AVENGERS #313, PUNISHER #29, SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #160
Enchantress—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #3 41 and 42
Executioner—NEW MUTANTS #85
Factor Three—MARVEL TALES #233
Geist—WOLVERINE #20
Goliath—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #60
Grip—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #41
Hela—NEW MUTANTS #85
Impossible Man—SILVER SURFER #33
Killer Shrike—MOON KNIGHT #10
Kingpin—PUNISHER #29
Kristoff—PUNISHER #29
Leviathan—SHIELD #7
Madcap—SHE-HULK #11
Mandarin—X-MEN #257, AVENGERS #313
Mole Man—AVENGERS WEST COAST #54
Nekra—ALPHA FLIGHT #80
Owl—ALPHA FLIGHT #80
Red Skull—CAPTAIN AMERICA #366, AVENGERS #313
Ringer—MOON KNIGHT #10
Scorpion—ALPHA FLIGHT #80
Shaw, Sebastian—AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #328
Super-Adaptoid—FANTASTIC FOUR #336
Sweetwater, Layana—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #41
Tess One—SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #160
Tiger Shark—WOLVERINE #
Typhoid Mary—POWER PACK #53
Ulik—THOR #413
Ultron—DAREDEVIL #276
White Shadow—MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #s 41 and 42
Wizard—AVENGERS SPOTLIGHT #28, AVENGERS #313

NEWSWATCH

PULSE-POUNDING PROSE PERTAINING TO PAPERBACKS AND PRIZES

ITEM: You're probably familiar with **Peter David's** writing through his work on SPIDER-MAN, THE INCREDIBLE HULK, and the dozen or so other comic books that he scripts each month. But didja know that ol' Peter has also written a bunch of honest-to-Forbush, look-at-those-endpapers books? Peter's had more than a dozen published so far, including a *Choose Your Own Adventure* novel starring **Spider-Man**, a *Star Trek: The Next Generation* novel, and an original tale about King Arthur returning from the past to run for mayor of New York City, entitled *Knight Life*.

And pretty soon, a new title will be added to Peter's evergrowing resumé, courtesy of the folks over at Ace Books. The book's called *Howling Mad*, and it's the tale of a werewolf in the big city. But if you're familiar with the twisted perspective that usually runs through Peter's work, then you've probably guessed that it's not your typical werewolf story! In fact, this is one werewolf story that's *not* about a man who turn into a wolf—it's about a wolf named Josh who gets bitten by a werewolf and suddenly transforms into a man! Josh needs to get back to his home in Canada to destroy the werewolf who's responsible, but considering that he's not used to being a human, he's lost in New York with barely a friend to his name, and the other werewolf is doing his best to see that Josh doesn't make it back alive, well, the trip might not be so easy.

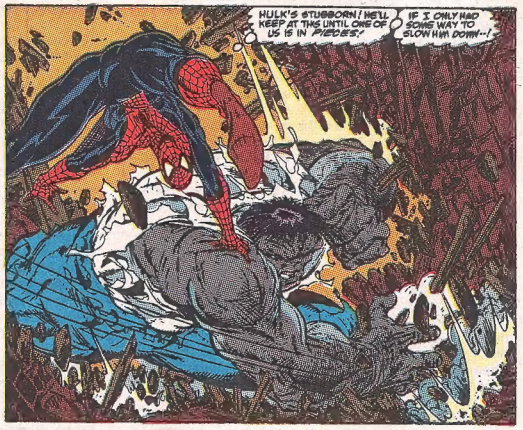
Howling Mad will be coming to your local book store some time in October. So this Halloween, why not start a fire, pour yourself a nice cup of hemlock, and sit back with a good book? Sure beats baying at the moon.

ITEM: The results are in! The *Comics Buyer's Guide* has announced the results of their annual fan awards, and we're pleased to say that quite a few familiar names turned up among the winners . . . including the winner of the award for Favorite Comic Book (THE UNCANNY X-MEN, what else?). Favorite Writer went to **Chris Claremont**, and switch-hitter **Todd McFarlane** took both Favorite Penciler and Favorite cover Artist. **Terry Austin** was named Favorite Inker, **Tom Orzechowski** came up as Favorite Letterer, and Favorite Colorist went to **Glynis Oliver**, with **Bob Sharen** coming in second. Favorite Editor went to our old pal, **Dennis O'Neil**, with **Bob Harras, Mark Gruenwald**, and our own **Jim Salicrup** helping to fill in the top five.

Among the story categories, the massive Inferno storyline was one of the top three contenders for Favorite Comic-Book Story, joining two Batman stories, *A Death in the Family* and *The Killing Joke*. And while *Killing Joke* was also named Favorite Original Graphic Novel or Album, the rest of the top five was made up of a bunch of titles you might just recognize: SILVER SURFER: JUDGEMENT DAY, THE PUNISHER: THE ASSASSINS' GUILD, IRON MAN: CRASH, SOMEPLACE STRANGE, and THE INHUMANS. Among the top three Favorite Reprint Graphic novels or Albums was none other than THE X-MEN: THE ASGARDIAN WARS. And NICK FURY VS. S.H.I.E.L.D. found its way into the top five contenders for Favorite Limited Series.

The Favorite Character spot went to that wacky **Dark Knight, Batman**, with (you guessed it) **Wolverine** coming in a fairly close second, but don't forget: the big guy's been around for fifty years now, so Logan's got time to catch up yet. Filling in the rest of the top five were **Spider-Man, the Punisher**, and **Daredevil.**

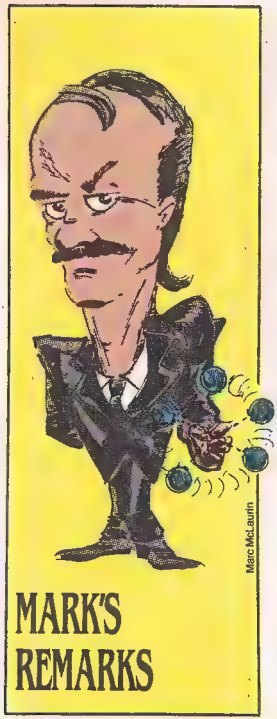
And that about sums it up. Modesty prevents us from telling you which Official Marvel Comics Newsmagazine walked away with the Favorite Publication About Comics award, so we'll just say "Thanks" to everyone who voted. See you next year, and remember: Voting is a weighty responsibility, so don't try to do it while operating heavy machinery.



MARVEL® TOP TEN

Mutants continue to dominate the Top Ten, as six of the Top Ten comics this month are mutant-related. Marvel's annual tradition of making the X-MEN biweekly for the summer is proving a smashing success, with the X-People nabbing the top two spots. For the record, our own MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE placed a respectable #34. Marvel's Top Ten is a list of the ten best-selling Marvel titles in the direct sales market as compiled by Capable **Carol Kalish**, our Vice-President/Direct Sales. So without any further ado, here's Marvel's Top Ten for August!

1—**THE UNCANNY X-MEN #254**
2—**THE UNCANNY X-MEN #253**
3—**WOLVERINE #17**
4—**EXCALIBUR #15**
5—**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #325**
6—**X-FACTOR #47**
7—**PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL #11**
8—**PUNISHER #26**
9—**WHAT IF #6**
10—**AVENGERS WEST COAST #51**



MARK'S REMARKS

I wear two hats, figuratively speaking. By day, I wear my Executive Editor hat, making executive decisions affecting the Marvel Universe and fetching **Tom DeFalco**'s slippers. By night, I wear my Freelance Writer hat, spinning out a minimum of two Marvel comics a month on my computer, one about the premier star-spangled super hero, the other about a freshly-minted cosmic champion who wears a headband. When I sit down to write my monthly page for MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, I usually (but not always) write from the perspective of Executive Editor, a spokesman for and authority on the Marvel Way of Things. Or at least from the point of view of a Marvel fan who's made it **big–Stan Lee** knows me by name!

What I don't often do is write about writing. What it's like to come up with a minimum of two comic book stories a month, and how I go about doing it. That's what I'm going to do this time out. A word of caution before we dive in. Every professional writer develops his or her own method of working that fits his or her particular needs, temperament, and creativity. All you aspiring comics writers out there, don't feel that you have to adopt my methods in order to write comics. Mine is just *a* way, one that works for me.

Let me start with my tools. I currently use an Apple IIe computer on which to compose my plots and scripts. Before I joined the computer generation two and a half years ago, I used a Smith-Corona electric typewriter. I am not the world's fastest typist, having accidentally taught myself how to type when I was ten and to this day cannot type correctly, but the computer has increased my output tremendously, and modified the very way in which I write. You see, I have a compulsion about neatness, and I would frequently tear out a page and start retyping it if I made a mistake or omission somewhere on it. Fear of having to do it over slowed down my speed considerably. Now that I can revise and rewrite to my heart's content on a viewscreen before running out a printed copy, I am free to type as fast as I can to put down the basic ideas, knowing I can go back and polish and correct annoying typos. My computer's about it as far as tools, though I keep a notebook and pen to write down plot ideas and such when I'm not near my computer. Occasionally when I research a character I plan to incorporate into a story (as I did last night with **Machinesmith**), I'll take notes longhand. Otherwise, everything else I write–plots, scripts, essays, and letters, from rough outline to final draft–is composed on computer.

On weekends, my time is a bit more flexible. An ideal weekend would give me a straight five hours on Saturday, and another straight five on Sunday. It seldom works that way. When I'm taking care of my pre-school age daughter, I can only write during her one hour afternoon nap or after she goes to bed at night, which is around 10 p.m. Starting work at 10 p.m. after an active day keeping up with a 4-year old is no picnic, I assure you. I usually think of myself as a night person, working best late in the day, but on weekends I will frequently roll out of bed at 8 in the morning and go straight to the computer and put in a few hours *before* I'm fully awake! Somehow when I'm still on the cusp of slumber, I have even fewer barriers to my subconscious than I usually do, and I can coax myself into working without even token mental resistance.

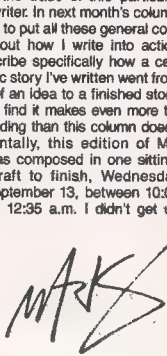
My work routine doesn't leave a lot of time for recreation, you say. Well, there's Friday nights and weekends. Just like being in school your entire life, huh?

What else? Ah, work speed. I mentioned how I picked up speed when I got computerized. I've refined other aspects of my work process as well. When I first began to plot comic stories, I did rough thumbnail sketches of the action broken down into panels to make sure I wasn't asking an artist to put an impossible amount on a page. After about two years, I got the feel of how much plot can fit on a comic page, and I dispensed with the thumbnails. When I first began to script comic stories, I roughed in the dialog on full-sized photocopies of the artwork as both a first draft and to determine how much copy would fit in a given place. Now I do my first draft on the computer, then go back through it when I'm done with all the pages I've written in one sitting to do a polish before running it out. Finally, when I'm doing copy-placement indications ("ballooning") and underlining words I want lettered in boldface, I do a third and final draft by hand. (Final, that is, unless my editor also asks for copy changes. These I also do by hand, usually on the spot.)

I tend to write reasonably detailed broken-down page-by-page plots (a plot for a 22-page book usually comes out to about 5 single-spaced typewritten pages). It's harder work for me to write a plot than a script. It takes me a whole lot of preparatory thinking, several writing sessions, and somewhere between 6 and 12 hours to compose a plot. It takes me about a half hour to script a page, on the average. The pages in the first half of the book go slower than the latter half because you have to introduce and identify the characters, conflict, and setting.

And that's the behind-the-scenes tricks of the trade of *this* particular comics writer. In next month's column I'm going to put all these general concepts about how I write into action and describe specifically how a certain comic story I've written went from a germ of an idea to a finished story. (Unless I find it makes even more tedious reading than this column does!)

Incidentally, this edition of M's Rems was composed in one sitting, rough draft to finish, Wednesday night, September 13, between 10:05 p.m. and 12:35 a.m. I didn't get up once.



X-TRA THE MUTANT REPORT X-TRA

VOLUME 4 "THE NEXT STEP IN NEWS EVOLUTION" NUMBER 10

CLOAK AND DAGGER® & POWER PACK®

GRAPHIC NOVEL

The streets are tougher than you are!

That's the message of the new Marvel graphic novel, SHELTER FROM THE STORM starring those merry mutants, Cloak and Dagger. The book guest-stars Marvel's pre-teen heroes, Power Pack, and delivers a powerful lesson about the plight of teen-age runaways.

Cloak and Dagger were runaways when they first came to New York, and now Dagger finds herself once again walking down that lonely and dangerous road—only this time, it's not by choice!

The graphic novel is written by the creator of Cloak and Dagger himself, Bill Mantlo, and drawn by Sal Velluto and Mark Farmer. SHELTER FROM THE STORM goes on sale in December.

The book begins when Dagger loses her memory, and finds herself out on the streets, with no knowledge of her super powers. Dagger doesn't know who to turn to, so she once again takes up the life of a runaway.

Dagger meets up with a pair of runaways from California, Marjorie and Juan. The three then face many of the dangers that threaten young people out on their own.

While the California kids deal with assorted street people, such as pimps, junkies, and prostitutes, Dagger must deal with a more super hero oriented threat.

Runaways are constantly exposed to greedy people who want to suck them dry and take them for all they're worth. Dagger comes up against a creature called Cadaver, who feeds off young runaways in his own way. He's like a human vampire, draining the energy from his unfortunate victims.

Cadaver has set up a phony shelter to lure runaways into his trap. He drains them of their lifelight, brainwashes them, then sends them out to find him more prey.

When Cloak learns that Dagger is missing, he begins a desperate quest to find her. Cloak knows his partner is somewhere out on the streets of the city, lost and alone.

Cloak enlists the help of Power Pack, since they are the only ones he can turn to. Because Cloak is sort of an anti-hero, people don't really trust him. Cloak and Power Pack dive into the underbelly of New York City in a frantic search to find Dagger before it's too late.

Assistant editor Marc McLaurin said the basic theme of the novel is this: If you can't handle something, and you need help, don't be afraid or ashamed to ask for it.

If you have problems, Marc said "there are agencies out there that can help you. They can help you deal with your problem, so you don't have to face things alone."

Bill Mantlo has done extensive research on the plight of teen-age runaways. Assisting Bill were the fine folks at Covenant House, a shelter for runaways in NYC.

Covenant House offers runaways counseling services, a place to stay, and someone to talk to. It offers kids an alternative so they don't have to be on the streets. The back of the book will contain an ad telling how kids can get in touch with Covenant House.

SHELTER FROM THE STORM has been in the works for quite a few years. The story actually takes place a while ago, back when the Power Pack kids had their original powers and original super hero names, and back before Dagger went blind.

You know how Mighty Marvel is — we'll keep on working on a project until we're absolutely sure we've got it just right!

Marc said the graphic novel is a book about runaways, for runaways. "I hope we can help some kids out there," Marc said. "Maybe some kids will try to seek help—to work things out before they run away.

"I hope people realize that they don't have to be alone. Running away is just a last resort."

The ways in which runaways are victimized has always been an ongoing theme in CLOAK AND DAGGER right from the beginning, Marc feels.

Although SHELTER FROM THE STORM deals with some pretty serious issues, there is still plenty of super hero action as well, as Dagger finds herself in the battle of her life against the evil Cadaver. Will Cloak and Power Pack ever find her? And if they do, will they be in time?

You'll find the answers in SHELTER FROM THE STORM, a book which also offers a message of hope for runaways: Maybe they won't have to run any more.

—Barry Dutter

Art © 1989 Paul Johnson

Are the major events in history—the wars, the assassinations, the terrorist activity—all the luck of the draw? Or, were they carefully placed hands in a larger game of mystery, evil, and psionic power? INTERFACE writer **James D. Hudnall** plans to let us in on the deal with this new on-going series from Epic.

"As a writer I like to reveal secrets," said Jim. "I like stories that are realistic *and* fantastic. And, there are so many things in our real world that are so bizarre that they are almost science fiction."

Jim went on to say that he takes his inspiration from real life, but then goes beyond today's headlines. He adds some speculation, little known facts, and some things he just made up, and puts his own group of psionic powered characters in the midst of it all.

"The story is set on present day Earth, except the world we know turns out to be something we don't think it is at all," said Jim. "The secret societies are controlling it all to shape their own political ends."

The INTERFACE world was actually first introduced several years ago in the ESPERS series from Eclipse Comics. INTERFACE comes into play following issue #4 of that storyline.

In that series, the father of one "gifted" person, **Linda Williams** is kidnapped by terrorists in Beirut. Linda's particular ability is that she is able to tap into the whole electromagnetic spectrum. In order to aid her father, she interfaces with a CIA computer to gather terrorist information, and stumbles onto a list of people with psychic abilities that the CIA plans either to recruit or kill.

Linda recruits some of these people herself to help her, and together they learn the terrorists are only a front for a larger, well-established conspiracy, and a group of evil **ESPers** called **The Inner Circle**.

"Everyone in the world has the ability for psionic powers," explained Jim. "The difference is a set-off in a particular person's genetic makeup. The Inner Circle planned to brainwash their captives, turn them into super-powered beings, blow up Beirut, blame it on another country, and thus start World War III."

INTERFACE opens with those plans being foiled by Linda's group, and needless to say, they are being pursued by The Inner Circle and their leader, **Sergei**—an ESPer himself. Also in pursuit of the group is **John F. Kennedy**'s second assassin—a small time hitman who thinks he has been discovered by the team. But, while his paranoia runs rampant, the ESPers have no inkling of his existence, much less his deed.

"I did a lot of research on this and I used only one of the many theories about JFK's assassination," said Jim. "I tie it into The Inner Circle as well. It's all tied together."

Just as the JFK segment is grounded in realism, Jim feels he takes all his characters from real life.

"They are heroes, but in a realistic way," he explained. "They come from different backgrounds. They aren't super heroes."

It's certainly true that the INTERFACE group of ESPer heroes is a varied lot. Aside from Linda and her gift, the group consists of: **Ian McVicar** from Great Britain, who has the ability to accelerate through time **Marie Rivas** from Argentina with her teleportation and force-field powers; **William Silent Bear**, and American Indian who possesses telekinetic abilities; **Simon Ashley** from Jamaica who can generate heat and fire; and **Jiro Yabuki** from Japan who has the ability to generate electricity and other forms of energy.

"The team originally got together to save Linda's father. They failed in that. He died in Beirut, but, they have stayed together to combat The Inner Circle and seek out others with psionic powers," said Jim. "They stay together simply for survival."

But those who aren't familiar with the first appearance of these characters need not worry. The first six issues of INTERFACE deal with the heroes getting out of their present situation. Issue #1 recaps the original series, but in a way that Jim promises is very interesting. He also promises to explain how such high-powered individuals could exist in today's world.

'My characters are actually on the power level of **Akira**, the Japanese character. And like Akira, the powers that be have tried to cover up the existence of ESPers," said Jim.

In fact, Jim counts AKIRA among his influences along with many spy-oriented works.

"I'm very interested in the political situations of the world," he explained. "And I can explore them more accurately in this type of story than I could if I were to send super heroes to South Africa to stop Apartheid. It just wouldn't be believable."

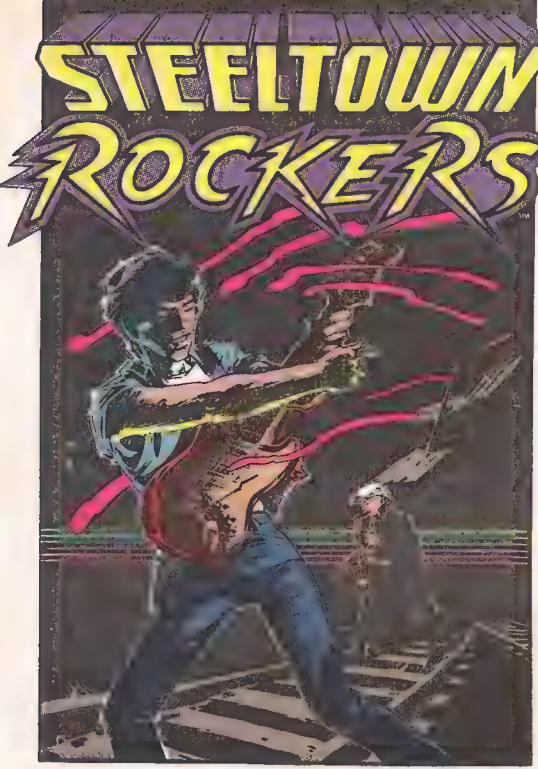
INTERFACE will be published bi-monthly, and will feature fully a painted art by British artist **Paul Johnson** who paints in a very detailed style.

"He can be as creative as a **Bill Sienkiewicz**, but in a realistic way," explained Jim. "It's beautiful."

And, if Jim himself is dealt the right cards, readers will think his work is a winner as well. Although it's not really luck with him.

"I created these characters many years ago, so I've had a lot of time to work things over," he said. "This is my best work ever. I call it a realistic X-Men in an espionage milieu."

—*Renée Witterstaetter*



Marvel is introducing a very different kind of comic book, which deals with the lives of a group of teenagers from a small town who try to better their lives by forming their own rock band. This is the story of STEELTOWN ROCKERS, a new monthly series based on a concept by **Larry Hama**, writer of G.I. JOE and former Marvel editor. The series is written by **Elaine Lee**, who previously wrote the Epic Comics version of her co-creation STARSTRUCK, illustrated by **Steve Leialoha**, who has worked on SPIDER-WOMAN, SECRET WARS II, and numerous other Marvel series, and edited by **Bobbie Chase**.

STEELTOWN ROCKERS got its start a few years ago. **Elaine Lee** recalls, "Larry Hama called me up on the telephone and said, 'Elaine, I have an idea for a comic book.' His concept was that it should be about teenagers in a town that's on hard times. The steel mill's closed, a lot of the businesses have closed down, and a lot of people are out of work. The teenagers from this town form a rock band, and they're making an effort to get out of this town and make their lives better. He'd come up with the town and the idea, and he wanted me to work on it because he said he wanted it to be character-based more than plot-based. He had a little two-page outline saying how he saw the town and everything, and I took that and came up with seven characters. I tried to make them all very different and I gave them different family situations.

"The band leader is **John D'Agostanto**, 'Johnny D,' his mother calls him Giovanni. He's an Italian kid from a working-class family." His father worked at the steel mill, but now he is unemployed; worse, he has a drinking problem. "And his mother's never worked outside the home. So the family's depending on Johnny to help bring in some money, but he wants to get out of town and go to L.A. and become a rock musician. So when we see him, he's caught between these two extremes. Does he go away and make his dream come true and be a famous musician?" Or does he stay home and fulfill his responsibilities to his family? "He's trying really hard to be good at everything, and he's a little bit up tight because of that."

Next there are two brothers, **Michael** and **Eddie Johnson**, who are black. "They live with their father; their mother's dead. It's an all-male household. The big story with these two is the sibling rivalry between them. The older brother, Michael, is the bass player in the band. He's quiet and studious, works hard at what he does. His dream of going to college gets dashed when his dad loses his job. He's in the same situation as Johnny, having to bring in some bucks from a part-time job. The younger brother is wildly talented. He's the youngest member of the band. His name is Eddie, and his brother calls him Eduardo. Eddie's got a rivalry going with John because they're both trying to be the lead in the band. But even though this kid has real wild talent, he's real irresponsible. He doesn't show up for half the rehearsals, and then comes into the performance and blows everybody away with a startling solo, so he thinks that he should be the leader of the group. He's the wild child in the band that gets everybody stirred up. "Then there's **Syd**. Her real name was Sadie. She's my Southern character; I have to have one of them." (Elaine herself is a Southerner.) "Her parents moved up to this mill town from the South, trying to find the American dream and all that. They made their life better. Syd's father worked in the mill. Her mother was a beautician in the town. They had their house in the little housing development where all the houses look alike. When he lost his job, her father couldn't deal with it and left. So Syd and her little brother and sister live in the house with their mother. Syd's the saxophone player in the band. She's the punk kid. She has white hair shaved on the side and wears black leather. She's still this sweet little Southern kid, but in this punk outfit. This is a recent change. She's a little shy, and she has a crush on John.

"**Jason** has got personality problems. He is not affected by the mill's closing like the other kids are, because his parents' jobs don't have anything to do with the mill. His parents are aging hippies. His father is a comic book artist who draws super heroes. And his mother has this little cottage industry: she has this kiln in the back yard and makes pots. The kid is real straight but has a lot of personality problems and has a hard time getting

along with other kids. He ends up being the band's keyboard player basically because he's the best friend of the guy they wanted to be their drummer, and because he's the only one who has a basement they can practice in. His parents don't mind if they make noise in the house. One of his big problems is that everybody likes his parents, and he has trouble rebelling like any normal kid. His parents are encouraging him to be in the band because they see the fact that he wants to be in it as the only sign of normalcy in their child. He loses his temper and flies off the handle and thinks of himself as tremendously intelligent. He thinks the rest of these people are just peons who aren't up to his level. He's really into his grade point average. He's got all this electronic equipment that he uses to sculpt sound: he feeds different sounds into his computer and makes this wonderful electronic music with it.

"His friend, who's living with them at the time, is **Terry Campbell**. He's the drummer. He's an outgoing, athletic kid. His parents have money, more money than Jason's parents do, so he's not affected by the mill's closing, either. But he doesn't live with his parents. He has a father and a stepmother who were management at the mill. When the mill closed, Terry's father just went to another company. But Terry wanted to stay and finish high school, so he ended up staying at Jason's house. Part of the reason Jason's in the band is because they want Terry.

"And the last member of the band is a girl named **Adora**. She's the rich girl, the really rich girl. She lives in this big mansion on the far end of town, and her parents don't have anything to do with the mill. She grew up with Terry. She's been off at boarding school, and she gets into the band as the female vocalist through knowing Terry.

"So you have kids who are very rich on one end, and kids who have fallen on hard times on the other end. Eventually, there'll be another member of the band who's the worst off of any of them. He doesn't have any real parents, and he's really poor. He won't appear until at least issue six."

In dealing with her large cast of characters, Elaine draws in part on her own background. "All of the characters are me in a way, have parts of me. Syd is sort of me in high school, and Adora is me after I grew out of the awkward stage," she says, laughing. Elaine sees the **Steeltown Rockers** band as having "the same dynamics" as a small theater company that she worked with in her early twenties.

But Elaine says it is hard writing about today's teenagers. "Back when I was a teenager, Kent State was happening, and we were living in communes and having Earth Day," she says, laughing. "The main thing about teenagers, though, is they really keep a lot of the same problems. The main problem I have writing it is I think back to when I was sixteen or seventeen, and I really get embarrassed about some of the things I said and the things I thought. From my point of view looking back, I felt these weren't real problems, but when you're a teenager, these are real problems. They are great big huge problems. Just being able to put myself back into that, it's difficult, but you can do it, really. Like one of the characters has an alcoholic father and has problems with his father. That's something I think any teenager can identify with, because they all have some problems with one or both of their parents. The sibling rivalry between the two brothers is something that you know about if you have a brother or a sister. Or having unrequited love: having a crush on a boy who just treats you as a friend, and he's going after a girl who really shouldn't be with him at all, and he's just going after her because of her looks. That's in there. Or, on the other hand, being the pretty girl that everyone wants, but not being taken seriously by anybody and being too young to know how to deal with that.

"The most difficult thing I've had to deal with is the problem of racism. Larry asked me to deal with this. There's a rich white section of the town, and a poor white section of town, and a black section of town. It's sectioned off, as these little towns still are today." Elaine wants to deal with the issue in a subtle manner, which she finds more true to life. Racism, she says, will be "presented in little ways, as when Johnny goes home with Michael and drives into the black neighborhood and appears to be uncomfortable. Or little things people say to each other, Michael calling him a 'white boy' or whatever. There's an undercurrent of it. But if this kid is uncomfortable about going to the other kid's house, he'd never say it out loud. What I want is to show these kids finding a way to work together and getting around all of this—all the different problems: race, class, money.

The Steeltown Rockers are (l-r): Jason, Johnny D, Syd, Terry, Mike and Eddie.

"We had trouble finding an artist because it's not your typical super hero book. A lot of the story has to be told through facial expressions. You have to deal with complex emotions that have to show on the faces or have to be put into the mood of the drawing. You have to be able to feel what the characters feel just by looking at the drawing—a lot of it isn't in the dialogue." Eventually, Steve Leialoha was approached and agreed to do the book. Elaine describes his artwork for the series as "wonderful," and Steve is also providing suggestions for how to deal with the characters.

The cast will not be introduced en masse in the first issue. Rather, Elaine will bring them in one or two at a time as she shows how the band gets formed. "In the first issue Johnny is the main character. It deals with this problem: do I stay here and help my family or do I take off for L.A., become a rock musician, and never look back? It's about how he balances these two things and finds a way to do neither and both of them. He meets Mike and Eddie and Syd in the first issue.

"In the second issue Terry and Jason come into it. Basically, they have a drummer that isn't Terry, and the story is about how they are going to get rid of him and find someone new. Somebody is going to have to fire this kid, and this is a job nobody likes.

"The third issue is titled 'After Midnight,' and it starts right after midnight when the band is through rehearsing. Each of the characters in his or her own way has a very weird night, but each of them has someone who supports him or her. You meet Adora for the first time, just briefly."

Elaine takes the series, its characters, and the issues it deals with very seriously. "I've really agonized over this book more than anything I've ever done. I'm not one of those people who says, 'Hey, it's just a comic book story.' I know that anything you put out there affects the people who read it, so I worry about it. I think about it." And soon you can see the results by picking up the STEELTOWN ROCKERS comic book.

—*Peter Sanderson*

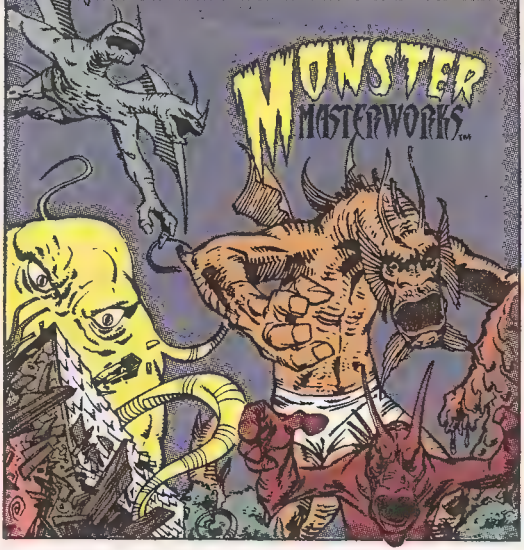
BLAST FROM THE PAST

Sometimes it seems as if the comic book business only began with FANTASTIC FOUR #1. But that's not the case. There were comic books before 1961. And some of them were darned good.

Never let it be said that Marvel Comics forgot its roots. Because of the high quality of the material and its inaccessibility to the ordinary reader, Marvel is publishing two volumes devoted to classic comic material from the 1950's. These two volumes are FIGHTING AMERICAN and MARVEL MONSTERWORKS. Both volumes feature the pulse-pounding work of one of comics' greatest innovators—**Jack (King) Kirby**!

The story of FIGHTING AMERICAN is quite unusual. Kirby and his collaborator **Joe Simon** had created the phenomenally successful **Captain America** in 1941. They wanted to repeat that success with a new patriotic hero set in the 50's, the rights to whom they would own. The result was **Fighting American.** Of course, since it was the 50's, the main antagonists for FA had to be the Communists. There was a Cold War going, you know. But the focus quickly changed once McCarthyism began to grip the country. Jack and Joe realized how crazy the hysteria sweeping throughout the land

FIGHTING AMERICAN™ and © 1989 by Joe Simon and Jack Kirby



was and they decided to reflect that craziness in their comic book. FIGHTING AMERICAN became a satire of the whole **McCarthy** era, poking fun at the excesses, exposing the lunacy for what it was.

Of course, there was plenty of slambang action as well. After all, this was a Simon and Kirby book. The hero, Fighting American was really prominent newscaster **Johnny Flagg**, who decked himself in a star-spangled outfit and fought the enemies of our country. Assisted by his kid sidekick, **Speedboy**, Fighting American did his part for Mom, apple pie, and Old Glory.

Interestingly enough, FIGHTING AMERICAN was not originally published by Marvel or its predecessors. Crestwood Publications and Harvey Publications were the homes of that particular star-spangled legend—that is until now. Marvel has not only decided to reprint some of FA's greatest adventurers in which he faces off against such foes as **Poison Ivan, Hotsky Trotsky,** and **Squarehair Malloy,** but it is reprinting them in style. FIGHTING AMERICAN will be issued in the Marvel Masterworks format, a definite treat for the eyes.

Of course, FIGHTING AMERICAN does not represent even a fraction of the prodigious output of Jack Kirby during the 50's. At that time, Marvel published very few super hero comics. This was a time before there was a Spider-Man! Instead of super heroes, readers of the 50's turned to a different kind of story. Those were the days when monsters strode the Earth. And nobody drew monsters like Jack Kirby!

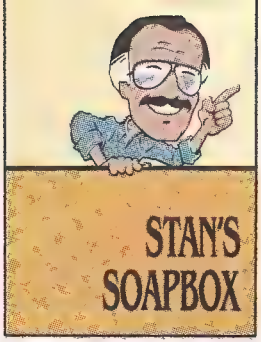
Nowadays, these classic stories are little known. The thrills such tales brought to the hearts of the comic readers of that period are a mere footnote in comic history. Not for long! For in a 176-page trade paperback, Marvel is reissuing some of those golden oldies in a volume it could only call MARVEL MONSTERWORKS.

This volume will feature many of Kirby's most famous monster sagas. Among the many bizarre creatures who can be found in the jungle of this fantastic tome are **Fin Fang Foom, Spoor,** the **Blip, Zzutak,** the **Thing that Shouldn't Exist** (in a story inked by **Steve Ditko**), **Kraa,** the **Unhuman, Grottu, King of the Ants** (in a story inked by **Bill Everett**), **It,** the **Thing that Lived,** and **Taboo.** The book will also feature two Steve Ditko tales. **Marcus McLaurin,** the editor of the book, revealed that the back of the volume will feature four classic monster covers.

Both books will feature a special treat. Jack Kirby, the founder of the feast, will write introductions to both. As an extra bonus, **Walt Simonson** has drawn a monster-packed new cover for the MARVEL MONSTERWORKS volume.

Sure **Spider-Man,** the **Fantastic Four,** and the rest are great, but there are plenty of other great comics out there. Some very special material was done in a bygone era. And Marvel is making these classic stories available once again—just for you.

—*Sandy Hausler, J.D.*



STAN'S SOAPBOX

Hi, Heroes!

Let's try something different this month! Instead of ranting and raving endlessly about all our exciting movie and television projects, let's discuss a few other matters of possible interest to the happy hordes of Marveldom.

But don't think this is because we've run out of theatrical projects to dazzle and delight you with! By the hoary Hosts of Hoggoth, nothing could be further from the truth! It's actually just a sinister scheme on my part to keep you in suspense for the nonce and to whet your **Galactus**-like appetite so that you'll be sure to be here next ish!

And, by the way, if anyone knows exactly how long a "nonce" really is, a detailed explanation sent to editor **Slim-Jim Salicrup** might just win you a highly-coveted No-Prize. (I love doing this to poor Jim. I've been trying to get him to stop reprinting those thirty-year-old **Willie Lumpkin** strips, but he won't! So, just wait'll he finds out that he'll have to spend hours reading all the extra No-Prize submissions that are sure to start pouring in! That'll teach him it doesn't pay to mess with **Sneaky Stan**!)

But now, let's move on to the heavy stuff.

How would you like to help determine editorial policy for your bashful Bullpen buddies? As you know, all the letters you send to mellifluous Marvel are carefully read, thoroughly analyzed and eternally treasured! But now, I'd like to ask your opinion about a specific subject, because of something that occurred a few days ago. Here's the story . . .

I recently attended the Edmonton Comic Book Fair in Alberta, Canada where I joined **Marvel-ous Marie Severin** on a panel which discussed the state of comic books in the world today. (Or perhaps it was the state of the world in comic books today. At any rate, you probably get the idea.)

Well, while the panel was engaged in a spirited question and answer session, one subject came up which created heated responses by virtually everyone in the crowded auditorium. In fact, interest ran so high that I decided to write about it in my next Soapbox column—which is this very one, you lucky devil!

The question which caused all the excitement was a simple one. Someone in the audience remarked that he had been reading Marvel for about twenty years (he was now in his early thirties) and he wondered why so many of the adventures have gotten so gloomy, why so much emphasis seemed to be on the grittier, darker type of stories.

No sooner had he raised that issue than almost everyone in the large gathering was clamoring to be heard, including the comic book professionals on the panel. It seemed to be a topic that most of comicdom was aware of and had very definite opinions about. Many people in the audience declared that they enjoyed the new "darker" type of stories, while an equal amount of fans and pros alike seemed to favor tales told in a lighter vein, with less angst and more fun in them.

Okay, so here's where you come in! The burning question is—are comic book stories becoming too dark and depressing? Should we lighten them up a bit and return to the more frivolous days of yore? Or, has this new, grittier style struck a responsive chord amongst the cultural mavens of Marveldom Assembled? Do the comic book tales of today simply reflect a more serious, more solemn view of the world, a view shared by our readers?

And there you have it; your chance to help determine the literary and artistic course of the comic book industry in the years to come! And, in case you think your opinions don't count for much, think again. In fact, mull this over for a while—we who work for Marvel get most of our comic books free, but you pay for yours. So who do you think is more important to the company—free-loaders like us, or cash customers like you?!! Hey, when push comes to shove, you're the boss! (So when do we get a raise?)

Since we went to all the trouble of asking for your comments on the issue of darker vs. lighter stories, I guess the least we can do is tell you where to mail your verdict. I haven't got the heart to lay 'em all on Jimbo's doorstep again, so why not just address your letters to "DARK VS. LIGHT SURVEY," Marvel Comics, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. We'll have a contest here in the Bullpen to decide who'll open the letters and tabulate your votes. The job will, of course, go to the lucky loser!

So, till next issue when I'll once again clue you in on all the Marvel movie and television news and nonsense from here in Hollywood, take good care of yourselves (I mean, we've invested a lot of time and trouble in you; we don't want it to go to waste), be good to each other, and wherever you go, whatever you do, think Marvel—because "Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose!"

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

WILLIE LUMPKIN

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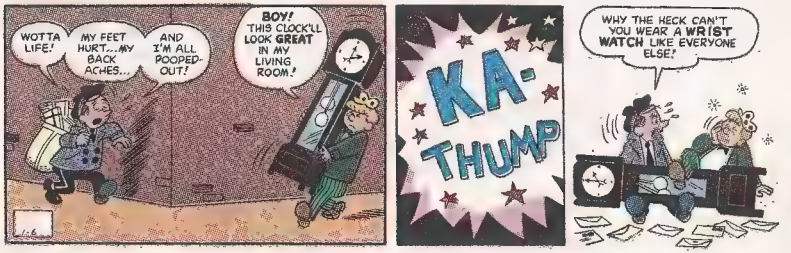
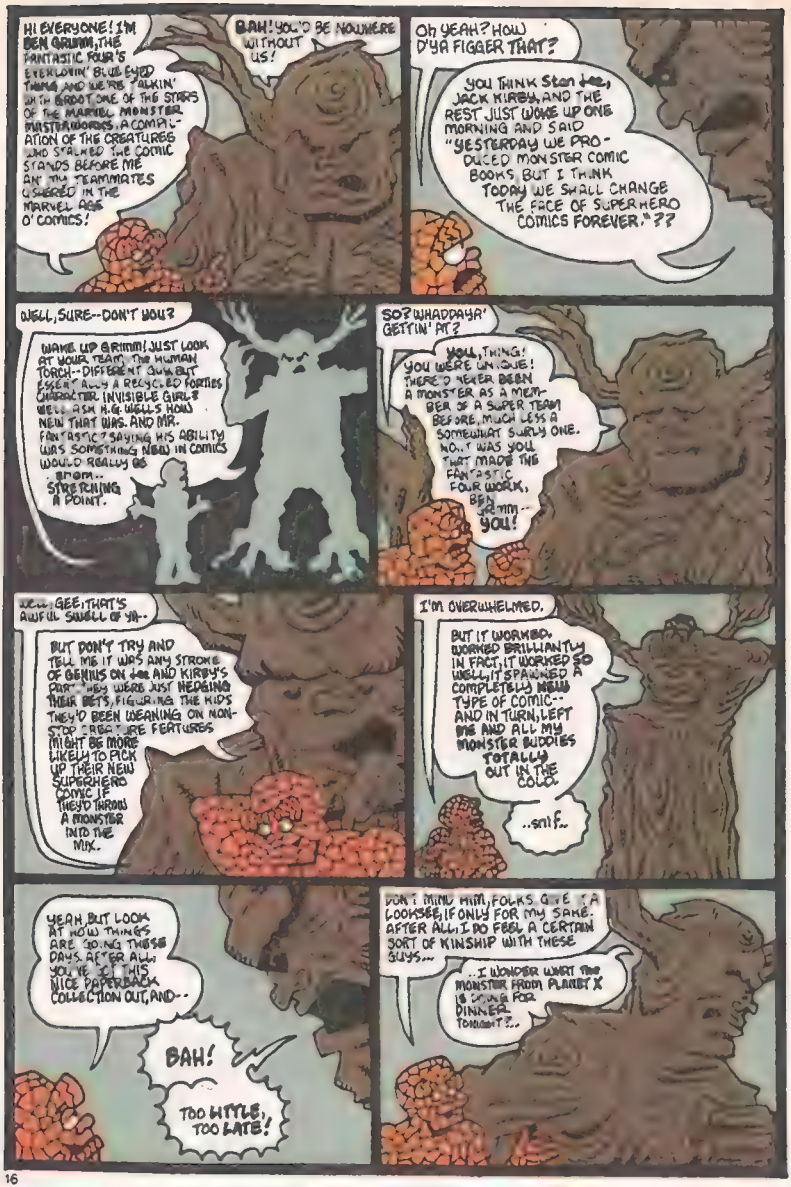

WOTTA LIFE!
MY FEET HURT...MY BACK ACHES...
AND I'M ALL POOPED-OUT!
BOY! THIS CLOCK'LL LOOK GREAT IN MY LIVING ROOM!
KA-THUMP
WHY THE HECK CAN'T YOU WEAR A WRIST WATCH LIKE EVERYONE ELSE?


HI EVERYONE! I'M BEN GRIMM, THE FANTASTIC FOUR'S EVER-LOVIN' BLUE EYED THING AND WE'RE 'ALKIN' WITH GROOT, ONE OF THE STARS OF THE MARVEL MONSTER MINISTERWORKS. A COMPILATION OF THE CREATURES WHO STALKED THE COMIC STANDS BEFORE ME AN' MY TEAMMATES U-SHERED IN THE MARVEL AGE O' COMICS!
BAH! YOU'D BE NOWHERE WITHOUT US!
OH YEAH? HOW'D YA FIGGER THAT?
YOU THINK Stan Lee, JACK KIRBY, AND THE REST JUST WOKE UP ONE MORNING AND SAID "YESTERDAY WE PRODUCED MONSTER COMIC BOOKS, BUT I THINK TODAY WE SHALL CHANGE THE FACE OF SUPERHERO COMICS FOREVER."??
WELL, SURE--DON'T YOU?
WAKE UP GRIMM! JUST LOOK AT YOUR TEAM! THE HUMAN TORCH--DIFFERENT GUY, BUT ESSENTIALLY A RECYCLED FORTIES CHARACTER. INVISIBLE GIRL? WELL, ASK H.G. WELLS HOW NEW THAT WAS. AND MR. FANTASTIC? SAYING HIS ABILITY WAS SOMETHING NEW IN COMICS WOULD REALLY BE ...grom... STRETCHING A POINT.
SO? WHADDAYA' GETTIN' AT?
WELL, THING! YOU WERE UNIQUE! THERE'D NEVER BEEN A MONSTER AS A MEMBER OF A SUPER TEAM BEFORE, MUCH LESS A SOMEWHAT SURLY ONE. NO...T WAS YOU THAT MADE THE FANTASTIC FOUR WORK, BEN Grimm-- YOU!
...well GEE, THAT'S AWFUL SWELL OF YA--
BUT DON'T TRY AND TELL ME IT WAS ANY STROKE OF GENIUS ON Stan AND KIRBY'S PART--THEY WERE JUST HEDGING THEIR BETS, FIGURING THE KIDS THEY'D BEEN WEANING ON NON-STOP SASQUATCH FEATURES MIGHT BE MORE LIKELY TO PICK UP THEIR NEW SUPERHERO COMIC IF THEY'D THROW A MONSTER INTO THE MIX.
I'M OVERWHELMED.
BUT IT WORKED. WORKED BRILLIANTLY IN FACT, IT WORKED SO WELL, IT SPAWNED A COMPLETELY NEW TYPE OF COMIC--AND IN TURN, LEFT ME AND ALL MY MONSTER BUDDIES TOTALLY OUT IN THE COLD.
..sniff..
YEAH, BUT LOOK AT HOW THINGS ARE GOING THESE DAYS. AFTER ALL, YOU'VE GOT THIS NICE PAPERBACK COLLECTION OUT, AND--
BAH!
TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE!
DON'T MIND HIM, FOLKS. GIVE IT A LOOKSEE, IF ONLY FOR MY SAKE. AFTER ALL, I DO FEEL A CERTAIN SORT OF KINSHIP WITH THESE GUYS...
...I WONDER WHAT THE MONSTER FROM PLANET X IS DOING FOR DINNER TONIGHT?...

?!
WELL, I'LL BE-- FIGHTING AMERICAN, IS THAT REALLY YOU?!?
HI, CAP.
GEEE, THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU WAS BACK IN SIMON and KIRBY'S STUDIOS--MID-FIFTIES, WASN'T IT?
UH HUH. 1955.
YOUR BOOK LASTED--WHAT? SEVEN ISSUES? GUESS JOE and JACK DIDN'T HAVE QUITE THE SUCCESS WITH YOU AS THEY DID WITH ME, DID THEY? HEH. I'M AN AVENGER NOW, YOU KNOW.
I'VE HEARD.
SAY, JUST WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE ANYWAY? YOUR ADVENTURES WEREN'T PUBLISHED BY MARVEL COMICS...
DON'T WORRY-- THE LAWYERS HAVE SEEN TO IT THAT THAT'S ALL BEEN TAKEN CARE OF. IN FACT, I'M HERE BECAUSE MARVEL HAS COMPILED MY ENTIRE 7 ISSUE INTO A PRESTIGIOUS MASTERWORKS COLLECTION.
NO, REALLY, I MEAN, I KNOW YOU WERE MEANT AS A BIT OF A GOOF ON ME, F.A., BUT--
IT'S TRUE. A FABULOUS HARDCOVER, STARRING YOURS TRULY.
BUT..BUT...I'VE NEVER HAD A HARD-COVER COLLECTION!?! ME, THE SENTINEL OF LIBERTY HIMSELF! WHY, THE CLOSEST I EVER GOT WAS THE AVENGERS MASTERWORKS COLLECTION--
--AND THEN, THEY COLORED MY EARS BLUE THROUGHOUT THAT ONE!
TSK TSK--NOW YOU'RE BLUE ALL OVER, EH CAP?
STAN LEE! I WANNA SEE STAN LEE, AND I WANNA SEE HIM NOW!!
SUCH A TEMPER.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HE'S IN HIS HOLLYWOOD HOT TUB WORKING ON A DEAL TO BRING BROTHER VOODOO TO THE SILVER SCREEN?!? THIS IS CAP, FER GOSHSAKES!!
WELL, CAPTAIN AMERICA ALWAYS DID TAKE HIMSELF A BIT TOO SERIOUSLY.
NOT ME FOLKS! IF YOU LOVE SLAM BANG ACTION AND NON-STOP GRINS AS ONLY SIMON and KIRBY COULD PRODUCE 'EM, WELL, I'M THE GUY TO SEE! PICK UP MY DELUXE COLLECTION, WHY DON'T CHA? OH, AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, WHY NOT LOOK FOR CAPTAIN AMERICA'S COMIC TOO? I BELIEVE IT'S ONE OF THOSE NON-DELUXE, CHEAPER, NEWSPRINT EDITIONS, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.
HEH
"MAYBE IF I PRETENDED TO BE A MILLIONAIRE, THEY'D GIVE ME A BOOK?..

critical mass

You thought the **Shadowline Saga** was hot before? Well, get ready—all of your favorite Shadowline heroes are coming back, in an adventure that's so hot, it's going to reach CRITICAL MASS!

CRITICAL MASS is a seven-issue graphic album Limited Series coming your way in November from Epic Comics. It features all the characters from the Shadowline titles, joining forces for the first time to confront a menace too great for any one of them to handle alone.

St. George. Dr. Zero. And the **Powerline team.** These are the heroes of the Shadowline Universe. Each of these characters starred in their own title for eight issues, until the decision was made to combine the books to accommodate this blockbuster storyline.

CRITICAL MASS is an epic story which not only ties up loose ends from the old Shadowline books, but also features the heroes in their greatest adventure yet. This story is the culmination of everything that has happened in the Shadowline books from the start!

The first six issues of CRITICAL MASS run 6 pages, and the seventh will be a whopping 80 pages—something that has never been attempted in a squarebound comic. Another first for Mighty Marvel!

The plot concerns **Dr. Henry Clerk**, a villainous physicist who works for the U.S. Government. Clerk was defeated by Dr. Zero in an early issue of Zero's own title. Now Clerk is back, with a plot even more insidious than his last one!

Clerk has recovered from his last encounter with Zero, and now plans on carrying out a little scientific experiment. He intends to cause the meltdown of all the nuclear reactors in the continental United States.

The reason Clerk is implementing his plan only in the United States is that he wants to study the effect his experiment has on a singular group. And who knows how many countries will fall prey to his twisted experiments after that?

The main heroes of the Shadowline Universe—Dr. Zero, St. George, and the Powerline team start off working separately on the case. At first, they don't know what Clerk is up to. As the story progresses, each finds out about Clerk in their own way and for different reasons.

It becomes necessary for the heroes to band together. Powerline and St. George find themselves out of their league, because the threat they face is so enormous. They are not given to saving the world—that's usually Dr. Zero's specialty.

Enlisting the aid of Dr. Zero is not an easy thing to do; he has a reputation for being, as they say, "difficult." But the other heroes do manage to approach Zero and try to get him to fight for their side.

Zero agrees to help, but only because it suits his own purposes. Zero's plan to stop Clerk will involve manipulating the other heroes into carrying out Zero's own scheme.

CRITICAL MASS will expand on a lot of sub-plots that were established in the regular Shadowline series. The limited series will resolve some storylines, as well as set up a lot of new directions for the future of the Shadowline characters.

CRITICAL MASS is written by the team of **Dan Chichester** and **Margaret Clark**, the duo who wrote the first seven issues of all the Shadowline titles. (Chichester and Clark did not create the Shadowline heroes—that honor went to **Archie Goodwin**—but the pair grew so attached to the Shadow Dwellers while writing them, they came to view the characters as their own.)

The new limited series picks up right where the original Shadowline books left off, allowing Chichester and Clark to continue storylines that have been building right from the start.

There will be a variety of fan-favorite artists handling the art chores for CRITICAL MASS. Each issue will be broken up into two main chapters and a few pages of incidental vignettes. Different artists will handle each chapter.

In the first issue, **Kevin O'Neill** and **Bill Siekiewicz** are doing the Dr. Zero chapter. **Gray Morrow** is doing all the Powerline chapters for the entire run of the series.

With issue two, **Mike Manley** will be taking over the Dr. Zero chapters, and **Kyle Baker** will be doing all of the St. George chapters. The exposition pages are being done by a variety of Marvel's top talents: **Jim Lee, Dan Speigel, Kevin O'Neill, John Ridgway,** and **Klaus Janson.**

Because the Shadowline comics were plagued by shipping delays, the series were never able to reach their full potential. Now that the three Shadowline books have been combined into one, it is felt this will serve as a better showcase for these intriguing characters.

Margaret said that because of the delays that hampered the old Shadowline books, "it was as if the books were cursed. We felt that the best way to give the characters a fair shake was to re-package the books into squarebound format. It really gives the Shadowline books a shot in the arm."

"We might bring the (limited series) out monthly. In this way, the accelerated storyline allows us to attract new readers."

CRITICAL MASS will be the most important story to date featuring the Shadowline characters. Lives will change, old characters will return, and the Shadowline Universe will be forever altered.

One of the key lynchpins of the entire CRITICAL MASS saga is a character who was killed by Dr. Zero #1, **Kara Janisery.** Kara was the last person to wear the St. George armor before **Michael Devlin.**

A reporter in DR. ZERO was looking for Kara for quite a while. In CRITICAL MASS, the reporter and Michael Devlin come across her body in South America. This discovery only adds to the dilemma of Michael Devlin.

One of the major conflicts in the limited series will be Michael's decision. Michael has been trying to decide what to do with his armor. By the end of CRITICAL MASS, he will know what has to be done.

Another prominent character in CRITICAL MASS is the self-regenerating boogey-man, **Shreck.** Shreck is the very businesslike corporate enforcer for a drug-running family, the Ravenscores. Shreck has the power to take a body part from someone and make it function for him. For instance, if Shreck takes a sharp-shooter's eye, he also gets the skills that go with it. If he gets a runner's legs, he gets the speed of a runner. Shreck does have a problem with body parts that rot away, so he has to pick up extra ones along the way. Shreck has a score to settle with Michael Devlin—the last time they met, Devlin ripped Shreck in half. Shreck will play a major role in Devlin's final decision of what to do with the St. George armor. Many comics creators have expressed a strong interest in Shreck, and it's possible the character may return in a mini-series of his own. The most likely artist for the project? Klaus Janson!

After CRITICAL MASS, there is a chance the Shadowline heroes may work together again. "There definitely is more of a bond between some of them than there was previously," Dan said.

"CRITICAL MASS leaves the door open for future cross-overs. Previously, up to this point, they really didn't interact a lot. They knew of each others' existence, but they really didn't have any direct confrontation situations. "Now they are much more aware of each other, and there is much more potential for further stories for them to come together."

Dan vowed that by the end of CRITICAL MASS, "the Shadowline Universe will never be the same." Margaret added that the limited series "will mark a major turning point for all the characters. Everything will be turned completely upside-down."

Dan and Margaret both said they would like to do more stories with the Shadow Dwellers in the future. But any further stories of Dr. Zero, Powerline, and St. George will probably be in the form of mini-series or one-shots instead of an ongoing series.

It is felt that the Shadowline heroes, like those of the New Universe, work best in that type of format. Perhaps the characters were just ahead of their time.

Dan described how he and Margaret write together. "She picks the consonants and I buy the vowels. It's the **Wheel of Fortune** school of writing!"

Dan said CRITICAL MASS will be self-contained; you don't need to be familiar with the Shadowline Universe to enjoy the story. But if you are, the story will have more texture.

The excitement of the Shadowline Saga has been building up for months, and now it is about to reach CRITICAL MASS. Be there when it happens!

—Barry Dutter

MARVEL® A-Z

Get set for another installment of Marvel A-Z—our annual preview of what you can expect to see in all Marvel and Epic Comics in the months ahead. As usual, we've interviewed writers and editors from all your favorite mags. Last ish, we covered everything from THE AGENT Graphic Novel to DR. STRANGE. This time around, we start off with the latest offering from Moebius, ELSEWHERE PRINCE, and end up with the ultimate ninja, the Nth Man.

SPOILER WARNING: If you don't want to know some of the secrets and surprises coming up in your favorite Marvel Comics—don't read this article! You've been warned!

ELSEWHERE PRINCE

Plots by **Jean "Moebius" Giraud**, script by **Jean-Marc L'Officer** and art by **Eric Shanower**. Six-issue limited series. Bookshelf format. $1.95.

Actually titled, **"Moebius' Airtight Garage: Elsewhere Prince,"** this limited series explores the self-contained world presented in the Moebius Graphic Novel #3, **THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE**. The reader sees this world through the eyes of a traveling artist, who is on one plane of the garage, looking to fulfill his dream—illustrating the most beautiful women in the world. But he soon discovers that what you look for isn't always what you find.

"The unusual thing about this story is that any time you see close-ups of the artist's sketch pad, it will actually be Moebius' artwork," said editor **Margaret Clark**. "Moebius will be doing that drawing."

The book will also feature a back-up entitled **"Major's Notebook,"** a collection of notes, stories, and sketches from the Major—the man who supposedly controls the world of the Airtight Garage.

EXCALIBUR

Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Alán Davis** and inked by **Paul Neary**. $1.00.

Excalibur is back on Earth, finally, and **Galactus** is waiting for them with a bad attitude. He just feels that this world isn't big enough for both he and **Phoenix**!

Jamie Braddock and **Saturyne** both make their moves, and when they're through with our heroes, it could mean the end of Excalibur! Can anyone save the day?

ELSEWHERE PRINCE™ and © 1989 by Starwatcher Graphics

FALLEN ANGELS Limited Series

Written by **Jo Duffy**, penciled by **Colleen Doran**, and inked by **Terry Austin**. Bookshelf format.

Described as crazy kids that live on the streets, editor **Bob Harras** promises an action-packed return for the Fallen Angels as they get involved in some situations that are pretty hard to handle, even for them.

"These are not really tightly connected adventures they'll be having," said Bob. "They are street-wise adventures."

In the course of these adventures, the kids will deal with drugs, a religious cult, a missing character, and a brand new addition to the team.

"In this book, we'll show the dark side of being a mutant," said Bob. "Not every mutant kid ends up at **Xavier's** mansion."

FANTASTIC FOUR

Written, penciled and inked by Walter Simonson. $1.00.

Walter Simonson will be joining the Four with issues #334–#336, sort of on half duty. He'll be writing those stories while **Rich Buckler** pencils for these "Acts of Vengeance" crossovers.

But come issue #337, Walt will have all the responsibility on his capable shoulders as he writes, pencils, and inks. He says he has several stories he really wants to do revolving around Reed and Sue—ideas he originally had while still working on **THOR**. Some of those ideas will be used in three separate stories that are kind of related because they all deal with time — the "time bubble," the **Dreaming Celestial**, and even time travel.

"In one sense you can say the Fantastic Four are going to fail in this adventure," said Walt. "It will certainly be their biggest failure."

A host of new characters and guest appearances are being planned for the book, among them the **Council of Cross-Time Kangs**, **Justice Peace** and **Death's Head**. Walt also plans to introduce an uncharted prehistoric-like land for the group's enjoyment.

"Given my interest in dinosaurs, it seems a natural to me," he said.

Each of the time related stories will probably run three issues, with the connecting theme of "honor lost, honor regained." After that, well, Walt won't say, except that he just might throw a really evil **Dr. Doom** story our way.

G.I. JOE

Written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **M.D. Bright**, and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. $1.00.

Issues #94–#96 will present a special story in the life of **G.I. JOE**: "The **Snake-Eyes** Trilogy." These issues will reveal, finally, the origin of Snake-Eyes, the relationship between him and the **Baroness**, his reasons for being in Saigon, his Vietnam exploits, and more. There may even be a costume change for this character who is easily one of the most popular in this series.

In future issues **Clutch** and **Rock n' Roll**, who have been brainwashed by **Cobra**, will be activated. And we can also promise that that nasty **Zartan** will resurface!

GHOST RIDER

Written by **Howard Mackie**, penciled by **Javier Saltares**, and inked by **Mark Texiera**. $1.00.

While playing in a graveyard, young **Donny Katch** and his sister witness a weird mob related murder. And since crimelords prefer not to have an audience, they attempt to kill both the children. Danny manages to get away by hiding in the Crypt which happens to contain a mysterious motorcycle. And, in a matter of seconds, he is transformed into the **Ghost Rider**—the Demon of Vengeance!

Future stories revolve around Danny trying to avenge his sister, who may forever be in a coma, and Danny's struggle to deal with being the Ghost Rider.

"He actually learns to like killing," said Assistant Editor **Jim DiGiovanna**. "He remembers what happens when he is the Ghost Rider, but he doesn't have any control over it. It's as if he is possessed."

GROO

By **Sergio Aragonés** with **Mark Evanier**. $1.00.

Groo will continue to tell the same old jokes, slightly revamped so that the reader won't notice until they've already spent the money . . . or so says editor **Dan Chichester**. He also promises that Groo will continue to wander with Rufferto at his side, tormenting helpless people, and causing large amounts of trouble.

"Whenever you think Groo has done something really stupid," said Dan, "He'll do something even more stupid."

HEARTS AND MIND Graphic Novel

Written by **Doug Murray** with bluelined art by Russ Heath. 64 pages.

Jim Brett quit ROTC because his girlfriend said he was a war-monger. So, his Uncle Sam immediately tries to prove her right by drafting the would be officer as a grunt private.

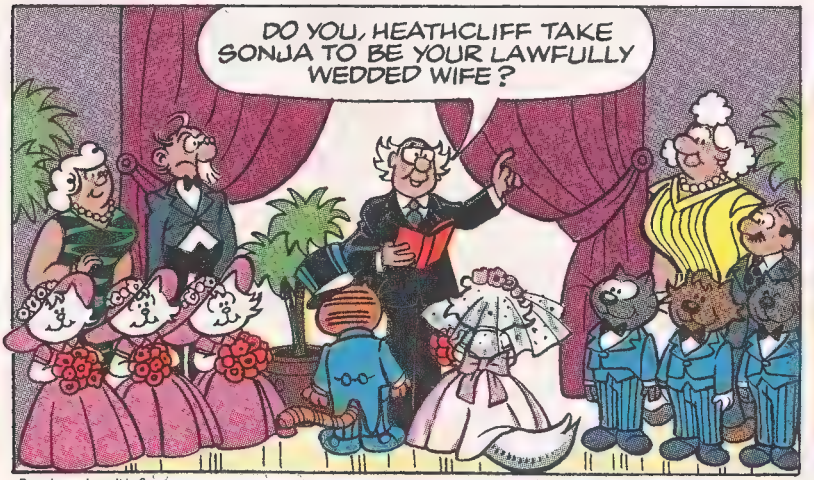
Soon, caught up in the horrors of the Vietnam War, Jim is trained to be a **John Wayne**. But he ultimately discovers that the American army cannot win the hearts and minds of its own people, much less the Vietnam War.

HEATHCLIFF

Written by **Angelo DeCesare**, penciled by **Warren Kremer**, and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. $1.00.

The bells are ringing for **Heathcliff** and his girl, **Sonja**, as they try to get to the church on time in an upcoming wedding issue. But, is married bliss really in the cards for swinging-single cat?

This cranky cat's tieing the knot is certainly the big news for the season, but don't forget the special Christmas issue when Heathcliff will play **Scrooge**—a man after his own heart!



Does he or doesn't he?

HEATHCLIFF™ and ©1989 by McNaught Syndicate, Inc.

HELLRAISER

Featuring the work of **John Bolton, Scott Hampton, Kevin O'Neill, Doug Murray, Bernie Wrightson**, and others. 64 page anthology. Squarebound format. $4.95.

If you like the "**Hellraiser**" movies, then this book is a must! It's not an adaptation of those films, but rather, it takes those basic concepts further as various people, in various stories, come in contact with the demonic Cenobites.

The stories take place across space and time when someone solves a Cenobite puzzle box, thus opening a doorway into Hell. The Demons emerge and usually offer the main character a deal.

Some of the upcoming stories include "The Warm Red" by **Jan Strnad** and **Bernie Wrightson**" "The Cannons of Pain" by **Erik Saltzgaber** and **John Bolton** and "The Treshhold" by **Mark Kneece** and **Scott Hampton**. These stories are set in the present, the middle ages, and the near future respectively.

HELLRIDER

Written by **Archie Goodwin** and art by **Joe Jusko**. One-shot. Squarebound format.

A post-apocolyptic road-warrior-type survivor fights to stay alive in a decaying America. His only friend is his motorcycle as he battles the horrifying mutants that desperately want him dead.

HERO

Written by **Dave Michelinie**, penciled by **Steve Purcell**, and inked by **Sam DeLa Rosa**. Twelve-issue limited series.

"**HERO** is about **Cody Pace**, a self-centered, Me Generation security courier from Hoboken, NJ, who blows up on page six," **David** said. "But instead of going to Heaven or Hell, he goes to this fantasy world called Peregrine-Magi. There he is pressed into fighting for the forces of good by a colorful cast of supporting characters.

All Cody really wants to do is go home and make the payments on his Corvette. But he finds that he has this battle-pike called Devilthorn, which only he can wield, and it seems to do stuff that's impossible. Also, nobody will tell him why he's here. This keeps going on until the end of Chapter Three, when Cody and his companions finally get to the main bad guys on this world, and they defeat them, but Cody is killed again and he fades out. In Chapter Four, Cody wakes up on this 1950's science-fiction world, and there he finds out what is happening to him.

Summing up the Limited Series, David said, "Basically, it deals with what it takes to be a hero. Cody and the four supporting characters all have heroism to a certain extent, but there's a point you can't go beyond because you just don't have it in you unless you're a true hero. And of course, Cody Pace is the antithesis of true heroism. So what happens when the whole fate of the universe is placed on his shoulders?"

HULK

Written by **Peter David**, penciled by **Jeff Purves**, inked by **Marie Severin**. $1.00.

Issue #364 begins the four-part "Countdown" series within a series, in which the Hulk is poisoned at the brink of sunset, and only has until sunrise to find the antidote. If he turns back into Bruce Banner, they'll both be dead! In his desperate quest to find his own cure, the Hulk must battle the Abomination, Ms. Marvel, and the mysterious man who afflicted him in the first place—Marvel's new super villain sensation!

Readers will also learn just what happened to all those people hit with gamma rays in Middletown!

And, as an added bonus, all the covers for this special story will be done by Mr. Walt Simonson!

INTERFACE

Written by **James D. Hudnall** with fully painted interiors by **Paul Johnson**. 28 pages. $1.95.

INTERFACE is the on-going series based on the **ESPers** characters created by James D. Hudnall several years ago. And they ARE some group! Possessing telepathic abilities of various sorts, they band together to fight a conspiracy of which only they are aware.

"Some of the characters are telekinetic, others can actually interface with computers," explained editor **Dan Chichester**. "They're mutants, but they're not mutants."

The series opens with the father of one group member being kidnapped, and the other team members set out to rescue him, only to become involved in a problem much larger than they ever imagined.

IRON MAN

Written and inked by **Bob Layton**, penciled by **John Romita Jr.** $1.00.

IRON MAN will start off with a bang in issues #251 and #252 with the "Acts of Vengeance" crossovers. **Iron Man** will have to face an assortment of villains, including the **Wrecker** and **Chemistro** in these tales written by **Dwayne McDuffie**, penciled by **Herb Trimpe** and inked by **Al Milgrom**.

Issue #253 will signal a whole new beginning for Iron Man as **Bob Layton** takes on the writing and inking duties, with **John Romita, Jr.** penciling. In their first thought-provoking issue, **Tony Stark** must go to a space station and repair it. While in the vastness of space, he begins to think about his life and what he needs to change. Expect some interesting conclusions.

KAZAR Graphic Novel: Guns of the Savage Land

Story by **Chuck Dixon** and **Timothy Truman**, script by **Dixon**, and art by **Ricardo Villagran**.

Rejected by the tribes of the Savage Land as their leader, **Lord Kevin Plunder . . . Kazar . . .** retreats to his English estate where he and Zabu lead an isolated life.

But now, in danger of losing his family fortune and being declared insane, Kazar is sought after to once again enter the Savage Land. This time as leader of a group that is in search of an unknown, mysterious segment of that prehistoric land—a section that can only be entered by way of Nevada. And even Kazar doesn't know what they may find there.

THE LAST AMERICAN

Written by **Alan Grant** and **John Wagner**, art by **Mike McMahon**. 32 pages. Hudson paper. Direct Sales only. $1.95.

THE LAST AMERICAN is set in the near future of the United States, a future devastated by nuclear war. The Last American of the title is **Captain Ulysses S. Pilgrim**, who had been placed in suspended animation, to emerge after the nuclear winter had passed. "He has the full authority of the President to restore the former American glory and to take revenge on the culprits responsible for the war," said writer **Alan Grant**. "Since it is unlikely that there will be any survivors, the series shows a serious side of nuclear war, a side that is not often explored.

THE LIFE OF GROO Graphic Novel

Story and art by **Sergio Aragonés**, script by **Mark Evanier**. 64 pages.

Last year's Graphic Novel detailed the **Death of Groo**, so what could make a more fitting companion volume? Here is all the other Groo you need to know: His birth, his childhood, his parents, and even younger versions of his friends, including the **Sage**, the **Minstrel**, and other surprises! You'll see how he killed most of his playmates; his first battle, and the spreading of his fame as the world's most dangerously dumb barbarian!

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS

Still more heart-stopping serials, including:

THE ORIGINAL BLACK KNIGHT—Script by **Roy Thomas**, artist to be announced. In a tie-in with the coming **BLACK KNIGHT** Limited Series, this serial will review the origin of the Arthurian Black Knight, his acquisition of the Ebony Blade, and the start of the legend that would not die!

POISON—Script by **Steve Gerber** and art by **Cindy Martin**. In this eight-chapter adventure starring the new heroine introduced in last year's **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL**, we'll learn **Poison's** specific powers and unique background as a Cuban refugee, against the backdrop of Miami politics and drug wars.

PUNISHER—Script by **Gerry Conway**, artist to be announced. A look into **Frank Castle's** past, a mere six months after he became the **Punisher**, reveals his discovery of the grey areas that lie between good and evil, in this 8-part serial.

THE YOUNG GODS—Script by **Gerry Conway** and art by **Tom Sutton. Odin's** proteges return to Earth, where they must battle among themselves to define their role for humanity. But as this 9-parter reaches its climax, they discover an overriding threat that compels their intervention, from one of the oldest gods in the pantheon!

MARVEL FANFARE

Written and illustrated by various writers and artists. 32 pages. $1.95.

Editor **Al Milgrom** promises some pretty neat stuff for us in the coming year—by a lot of folks you know and love.

Issue #48 is the mostly **She-Hulk** issue that will feature two green goddess stories with a **Vision** story thrown in for good measure. These pieces include "Father Shame" written by **Dwight Zimmerman**, penciled by **Kerry Gammill**, and inked by **Joe Rubenstein**, in which She-Hulk must come to terms with her estranged father. In "California Dreamin," written by **Sue Flaxman**, and penciled by **Don Perlin, Jennifer** is whisked off by a friend who is into dream research and ultimately becomes involved in a battle in the dream realm. The Vision tale is written by **Michael Higgins**, penciled by **Ron Wilson**, and inked by **Jim Sanders III**.

Future issues of MARVEL FANFARE will include an **Alan Weis Dr. Strange** story in which Doc goes back into the past to the wild, wild west, and it's called "Strange on the Range." "A Time to Choose" has **Sandman** seeking a normal life and ultimately battling the **Frightful Four**. That's from the creative team of **Tom DeFalco** plotting, **J.M. DeMatteis** scripting, **Mike Zeck** penciling, and **Dan Green** inking.

And don't worry, there's plenty more where these came from.

MARVEL MASTERWORKS

Written by **Stan Lee**, illustrated by **Jack Kirby** and **Don Heck**. Edited by **Greg Wright**. Hardcover. $29.95

Here they are—more hardcover masterpieces from the Marvel archives. And the first book up to bat will feature **AVENGERS** #'s 11-20 in **MARVEL MASTERWORKS** #9. Issue #10 will include **SPIDER-MAN** #'s 21-30 and **ANNUAL** #1. This was the first annual ever in Marvel history by the way, and several major Marvel villains had their introduction in the course of this book's stories. Issue #11 will reprint **X-MEN** #'s 94-100, as well as the **GIANT-SIZED X-MEN** #1. These issues feature the talents of **Len Wein, Chris Claremont**, and **Dave Cockrum**. "This is the new X-Men—**Wolverine** and **Colossus**," said editor **Greg Wright**. "What we have here is the very foundations of the Marvel Universe."

THE MARVEL UNIVERSE UPDATE

Written by **Peter Sanderson** and others, illustrated by various artists. $1.50.

You might say that the **MARVEL UNIVERSE UPDATE** is an exclusive club. Writer, **Peter Sanderson**, does have a few guidelines for membership.

Peter is only trying to cover characters who are either brand new, that have appeared three times since the first MARVEL UNIVERSE series, have recently been brought back and have regained prominence—like the **Headmen** in **SHE-HULK**.

A few completely new changes in content will also be evident. Instead of just including super-powered characters, Peter will provide space for prominent supporting characters like **Mary Jane Watson Parker** in **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** and **Foggy Nelson** and **Karen Page** in **DAREDEVIL**. Also, instead of using art from old stories, all the art will be completely new!

"What surprises me is that so much has indeed changed," said Peter. "New characters are being added and new revelations have been made. It's really exciting!"

MOON KNIGHT

Written by **Chuck Dixon**, penciled by **Sal Velluto**, and inked by **Tom Palmer**. Mando Offset paper, $1.50.

The "Acts of Vengeance" crossover will wrap up in **MOON KNIGHT** with issue #9, "Call to Heaven", in which the **Punisher** and **Moon Knight** take on some pretty hefty foes.

Issue #10 will guest star inker **Mark Farmer** with "Trouble Times Three" in which the hero takes on **Killer-Shrike, Coachwhip** and . . . the all new **Ringer**!!! Issue #11 begins a four-part blockbuster starting with "Distant Thunder." Moon Knight is stalked by the incredible menace, **Arsenal**. Also, look for the return of the Bushman. Starting in issue #15 is a three-part saga in which **Mark Spector** must confront the demons of his mercenary past.

"We've got a lot planned for this book," said editor **Danny Fingeroth**, "And it's all going to be exciting."

THE 'NAM

Written by **Doug Murray**, penciled by **Wayne Vansant** and inked, by **Geoff Isherwood**. Mando Offset paper. $1.50.

Editor **Don Daley** is promising a harder hitting storyline in **THE 'NAM** this next year—that's for a comic that's pretty hard-hitting as is.

"What happens will happen faster and more dramatically, as we follow the American withdrawal from Vietnam in the 1970's," said Don. "We'll explore what happens to the soldiers both physically and emotionally."

Several upcoming stories of note include issue #41 that will guest star **Captain America, Iron Man,** and **Thor** when a comic reader is killed and his buddies go through his footlocker. Don calls it the ultimate "What If" story. Issue #42 will present a story through the eyes of three different people—one of whom is going to be court-martialled. "It's a story about sacrificing one person to save the whole group," said Don.

NAMOR: The Sub-Mariner

Written and penciled by **John Byrne** with inks by **Bob Wiacek**. $1.00.

John Byrne is promising a new direction for the **Sub-Mariner**—and that means no visits to Atlantis. Instead, since **Namor** knows where all the sunken treasure ships are in the ocean, he gathers a mass of wealth and becomes a very well-to-do super hero.

"It's already been established that he owns a movie studio, so we'll see more of that," said John. "There will also be an ecological slant to the series."

Namor will attempt to play the surface man's game, but incognito. He'll do it by buying a corporation and using that to help him change what he sees wrong with the world.

Also expect a lot of guest villains including the **Griffen, Dr. Doom, Puppetmaster,** and two new foes—**Desmond** and **Phoebe Marrs**.

"Those two are rich kids who will be giving Namor an awful lot of trouble," said John.

NEW MUTANTS

Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Rob Liefeld**. $1.00.

"The **New Mutants** are facing grim days ahead," said editor **Bob Harras**. "They have a new leader—but will he lead them to their own destruction?"

Bob uses very ominous tones to describe this new mystery leader that will replace **Professor X**. Harras also promises a jailbreak and some new mutants showing up here and there.

"This is an interesting book because they are just kids out there trying to survive," Bob said.

NIGHTBREED

Written by **John Wagner** and **Alan Grant**, with art by **Jim Baikie**. 32 pages. $1.95.

There's a race of creatures called the **Nightbreed** who have lived underneath humanity for centuries—the werewolves, the vampires, the creatures of the dark. And, when our hero, **Boone**, is attacked by one of this clan, he becomes a member himself.

"They aren't evil people," said editor **Dan Chichester**, "just misunderstood."

The first four issues of this on-going series will adapt **Clive Barker**'s movie of the same name. Then it will go on in its own direction as the Nightbreed are scattered around the world, and Boone is the messiah that must try to bring them together again.

Nth MAN

Written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Ron Wagner**, and inked by **Fred Fredericks**. $1.00.

What if World War III occured without the use of nuclear weapons? Read **Nth MAN** for a possible answer. If you do read this comic, you'll also be introduced to two of the most unusual characters in comics—**John Doe** and **Alfie**. At present, it seems that Alfie and John (Nth Man) were both raised in the same orphanage and were both adopted by the CIA. And, while John was trained as a ninja, Alfie was turned into the most powerful being on earth.

"He has the mind of a twelve year old in the body of a grown-up," explained Assistant Editor **Jim DiGiovanna**. "He travels through space and time. In fact, time can change from panel to panel in this book. He's utterly powerful, and he has destroyed all nuclear weapons on Earth, thus causing chaos."

Issue #8 will explore Alfie's past in a story that takes us back to 1965 and the orphanage, as we learn the roots of Alfie's evil. Issue #9 finds John Doe zapped into a video game by Alfie. Meanwhile, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are launching chemical weapons at each other.

"By issue #11 the world is pretty much over," said Jim. "All national boundaries are gone. And John is trying to stop Alfie from causing any more trouble, but it's probably too late."

THE INCREDIBLE HULK®

COUNTDOWN™ 4...3...2...1

The **Hulk**'s been blown-up and teleported. He's been tricked by aliens, fired from his Las Vegas job, and pitted against **Satannish**. So what does INCREDIBLE HULK writer **Peter David** have in store next for the Hulk? The answer: "Countdown," a four-issue mini-series within a series that begins with HULK #364 and concludes with issue #367. Working with Peter on the series are regular Hulksters **Jeff Purves**, pencils; **Marie Severin**, inks; **Glynis Oliver**, colors; and **Bobbie Chase**, editor. As the next installment in Peter's ongoing Hulk saga, "Countdown" presents the Hulk with his greatest battles ever: against his temper, against his body, and most importantly against time.

The premise of "Countdown" is that **Bruce Banner** is poisoned just before he changes into the Hulk. Banner tumbles onto the fact that something is wrong an instant before he becomes the Hulk, and since it was on Banner's mind the Hulk is also aware of it. "When the Hulk is similarly feeling ill affects," Peter explains, "he knows that something is very wrong, because even if Banner is poisoned that shouldn't effect the Hulk; the Hulk's system should be able to blast it right out." Physically, the poison manifests itself as intense chest pains, primarily because the poison causes a hardening of the Hulk's arteries.

Peter states, "This is a specially, ingeniously conceived poison that is, if you'll pardon the expression, mutating within the Hulk's immunity system. To a certain extent it's an AIDS virus in that it's constantly shifting and changing, and the Hulk's healing ability is not able to overcome it." The problem of the Hulk then, is that at dawn he's going to transform back into Bruce Banner, and when he turns into Banner, he's going to die instantly from a massive heart attack.

Although the Hulk's system is able to somewhat ameliorate the poison's effect, he is still quite susceptible to heart failure. "For the first time," Peter points out, "rather than being in a situation where the madder he gets the stronger he gets, the Hulk is in a position where the madder he gets, the likelier he is to keel over and die." So the Hulk has to try and keep himself on an even level, keep his temper in check, and this is a new experience for the Hulk. This puts the Hulk in a precarious position when he eventually has to battle the **Abomination**, the **Fantastic Four**, as well as the **Leader** and his minions, all the while searching for a cure before dawn.

On his quest for a cure, the Hulk comes across **Mr. Fantastic**, but he is, much to the Hulk's chagrin, also accompanied by **Ms. Marvel**, **Ben Grimm**, and the **Invisible Woman**. Whereas Mr. Fantastic is willing to listen to reason, Ms. Marvel promptly attacks the Hulk to get back at him for the plastering the Hulk gave the **Thing** back in issue #350. In the meantime, Ben Grimm is in a difficult situation because he would love to take a shot at the Hulk, "but," says Peter, "since he's presently a human being, a Hulk/Ben Grimm fight would last roughly one panel. Yet, the Hulk and Ben Grimm do indeed have the chance to get together and sort out their rather tangled history of animosity that goes back 25 years."

Doc Samson also makes a guest appearance when an all-out war breaks out between the Hulk and the Abomination at the Yucca Flats Laboratory where Banner is currently employed. A fight of such magnitude is not going to be much of a secret at a high security installation like Yucca Flats, so when the government gets wind that there is a battle involving gamma irradiated beings, of which the

Abomination is definitely one, they send in Samson.

Samson does some poking around, and he realizes with this grey behemoth running around that it's got to be the Hulk. While the vast majority of the world is still under the impression that the Hulk is dead. Samson becomes one of the handful of peole who is aware of the Hulk's true status. "Samson relays this information back to the government who decides to keep it quiet for understandable reasons," Peter explains, "Why alert the public at large to the information that the Hulk is running around and might be in your neighborhood real soon."

The confrontation between the Hulk and the Abomination is going to result in a wild new look for the Abomination, because at the climax of the fight something rather hideous and disgusting happens to him. "So we're going to be answering two things here," Peter reflects, "number one, we're going to make the Abomination really abominable rather than look like a 1950's B-monster; and number two, we're going to give him a direct reason for having it out with the Hulk other than just that the Hulk has beaten him up in the past."

"Countdown" also sees the introduction of a new villain, **Madman**, to the Hulk's rogues' gallery. The creation of Madman coincides with the Hulk's earliest incarnations, and he makes his first mysterious appearance in part one of the series, background appearances in parts two and three, before coming to the forefront of things in the climactic fourth issue. "Madman is exactly who you think he is, except he is no one you thought he was. I don't want to give away too much, but I will say that Madman is not **General Ross**." Adds a smiling Peter, "then again, maybe he is General Ross."

Peter further states that "Countdown" is not a murder mystery. "I don't write murder mysteries. I'm not terribly good at it, I don't have that kind of puzzle box mind. When I wrote the 'Death of Jean DeWolff,' for SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, to me it was screamingly obvious that **Stan Carter** was actually the **Sin-Eater** because there was no one else the Sin-Eater could possibly be. And yet it caught lots and lots of people by total surprise. With 'Countdown' we essentially have the same thing, I'm not making any bones about it: Madman is the one behind the attempted murder of the Hulk. I know it, the readers know it, the Hulk doesn't know it, and the Hulk is desperately trying to find out something the readers already know—except the readers don't know everything they think they do."

As a writer, Peter feels very strongly about treating his readers with respect. "I like to make things clear, but at the same time I don't feel like I have to overdo it. I put in things and let them read between the lines, I don't spell things out. By allowing the readers to interpret the stories as they see fit, they often do and in ways Peter never even intended. "My favorite," Peter says, "was the letter writer who wrote in saying that the Hulk is quoting the philosophies of Nietzsche, which I thought was very intriguing. And I said if the Hulk is reading Nietzsche, he's doing it on his own time because God knows I have't read Nietzsche. We've also gotten fascinatng treatises on the Hulk's id, ego, and psychological makeup"

As always, the Hulk/Banner conflict is central to the storyline. "I don't want to go into too much detail about how 'Countdown' will effect the Hulk vis-a-vis Bruce Banner," Peter confides, "except to say the Hulk/Banner relationship is never going to be smooth one because that would sort of vitiate the entire premise. If the Hulk and Banner both think that each other are really swift guys, that to my mind kills the entire relationship. I love the concept of **Jeckyl/Hyde**, that's what it should always be.

"What happens over four issues is that the Hulk, because he can't get angry as he's suppose to, starts to become more and more like Banner, and Banner becomes more like the Hulk Bruce Banner should always be to a certain extent embarrassed by the Hulk, because the Hulk is everything Bruce Banner keeps repressed, and it's out there for public display. Not only that, but people hold you responsible and that's something that Bruce Banner has a constantly difficult time dealing with. And as the two personalities start to develop, that leaves all sorts of interesting story possibilities."

Time is also a very strong motif throughout "Countdown," as icons of time permeate the series. Along with an array of background clocks, a digital clock appears at key moments in the book to indicate precisely how much time the Hulk has going for him "It will be down to hours and minutes and seconds." Peter elaborates, "just like the title says, 'Countdown.' At the start of the story, when the time clock punches in, it's going to be something like 16 hours, 23 minutes, 5 seconds which is going to sound like much time. But as time goes along and as time start to dwindle down, the readers should hopefully become more and more alarmed. I can tell you right now, with utter conviction, that it's going to come down to the last seconds."

In addition to time as a theme inside the books, time also adorns the outside as FANTASTIC FOUR writer/artist **Walter Simonson** has drawn a series of covers each featuring an hourglass. The covers progressively portray the Hulk struggling against the increasingly heavier sands of time. Joining the hourglass encased Hulk, the villains of each book also appear on their respective covers: the first cover features the Abomination; the second, Ms. Marvel, the third, the Leader, and the fourth cover features the Madman in shadow.

The idea for writing "Countdown," was something Peter began developing some months back when he was trying to come up with something that would accomplish everything the fans have been saying they've wanted to see. "They said they wanted to see the return of the Abomination, to see yet another match up with the Thing, see the return of the Leader and the **Gamma Gang**, and they wanted to see some more movement with the storylines that I have deliberately left hanging since issue #346. At the end of issue #346 the Leader says, 'All I need is time.' Well, I've given him a year-and-a-half to start doing something. Whenever I construct a storyline for the Hulk, I usually think over the long term. So what I'm really doing is gathering all the threads and all the villains, all the potentials of the Hulk for over 25 years, and trying to hit all the bases over a four-issue storyline and then go off in a new direction."

After "Countdown," following storylines will basically be spin-offs. One of the things Peter would like to do is lead into the return of Bruce and **Betty** as a couple, or more precisely Bruce seeking Betty. One of the knocks Peter has heard about the Hulk is why isn't Bruce out looking for Betty. Peter's immediate response is "that's a great idea, but where in the globe do you suggest he look?" The Hulk doesn't know where to look, so he's putting out feelers. And in an endeavor to locate Betty, he talks with **Tony Stark** in issue #362. It will be a race as Bruce tries to find Betty while the government tries to capture Bruce. Once Bruce finds Betty, he will have some major decision making to do, Peter reveals, "because he will find that Betty has undergone a surprising and startling change that no one expects."

For those who enjoy psychological challenges, Peter's upcoming storyline, "Honey, I Shrunk the Hulk" should certainly prove entertaining. Says Peter, "it's not necessarily what you think, it's just pure going off the psychological deep-end as we explore the various ramifications that have been present over the past 25 years. I'm going to be raising all kinds of questions that are easily there if you just think about it."

—Alex Chun

THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS–1980 PART THREE

1980 saw Marvel going where no man had gone before, with a whole starship full of space fantasy and science-fiction titles–led by the premiere of Marvel's STAR TREK! Timed to coincide with the release of the first film, "Star Trek: The Motion Picture," the first three issues adapted the screenplay story of the Enterprise's duel with the ominous mechanoid called **V'ger!** Subsequent tales by **Marv Wolfman, Mike W. Barr,** and **Dave Cockrum** took **Captain Kirk** and crew to the Haunted House of Space, to a planet that worshipped the Enterprise, and to another world ruined by war between organisms and machines. A plague of madness and a murder mystery rounded out the year for Jim, **Spock,** and **Bones.**

The movies' other great space fantasy, STAR WARS, continued its successful run as a Marvel Comic, with all-new tales spun monthly by **Archie Goodwin** and **Carmine Infantino. Luke Skywalker** returned to his homeworld, Tatooine, to defy the Empire, where he was joined by **Chewbacca, Han Solo,** and the Jawa Express! The **Tagge** family plagued our heroes repeatedly: **Domina Tagge** proved a ruthless adversary and **Baron Tagge** wielded a lightsabre to deadly effect. All the while, **Darth Vader** manipulated events from behind the scenes. After a thriller which saw Luke and **Leia** trapped in a living starship, the year climaxed with the six-part adaptation of the second, newest film in the canon, "The Empire Strikes Back!"

Aficionados who wanted these tales on glossier paper with better colors had only to turn to the magazine-format MARVEL COMICS SUPER SPECIAL, which presented novel-length adaptations of both "Star Trek: The Motion Picture" and "The Empire Strikes Back" in its drama-drenched pages. Also adapted, for you completists out there, was the **Gene Kelly/ Olivia Newton-John** flick, "Xanadu."

Television space fantasy also received its due at mighty Marvel, in the comic version of BATTLESTAR: GALACTICA. **Will Starbuck** was nearly trapped on Scavenge World before his daring escape, while **Commander Adama** made his own escape, from the threat of the Memory Machine. **Sire Uri** was put on trial, and the Galactica stalwarts dealt with such other menaces as **Mark III,** the Ultimate Cylon; the Food Pirates; and a lovesick monster who captured **Athena** for his very own!

Marvel continued the licensed adventures of a host of other sf characters: SHOGUN WARRIORS, ROM, and the MICRONAUTS! The first of those groups met their end in 1980, shortly after the death of their mentors, the Followers of Light, and the destruction of Shogun Sanctuary. The perils they stopped ranged from a runaway meteor to the Japanese Yakuza, from **Dr. Demonicus** to the alien, **Megatron,** from demons on the Moon to a kid who commandeered one of the Shogun Warriors. In a two-parter guest-starring the **Fantastic Four,** they stopped the machinations of their arch-enemy, **Maur-Kon,** before fading bulkily into the sunset.

Rom, with only his premiere issue under his belt, launched into a sustained war against the **Dire Wraiths** who had infiltrated every corner of the Earth! The Wraiths grafted criminal **Archie Stryker** into the spaceknight armor of **Firefall**–they sicced the **Hellhounds** of the Dark Nebula on Rom–they subjected him to **Thornoids** and the **Deathwing**–but Rom held his own with the help of his energy analyzer and neutralizer! His only allies were **Brandy Clark, Steve Jackson** (himself quickly replaced by a Wraith), and briefly, the creature called **Serpentyne!** But when Wraith mastermind **Dr. Sweet** contrived to make earthlings believe Rom was their enemy, the spaceknight from Galador was forced to battle both the military and **Jack of Hearts.** As the year ended, he handily dispatched the **Plunderer,** and a back-up series started to answer our questions about the long and glorious history of the Spaceknights.

ROM writer **Bill Mantlo** also helmed MICRONAUTS, which won Britain's Eagle Award as Best New Comic! The miniature warriors started the year on **Bug**'s homeworld, Kaliklak, where they fomented a revolution to overthrow the vicious **Wartstaff. Psycho-Man** attacked both the **Micronauts** and the guest-starring **FF**, and the team mourned both **Jasmine** and **Microtron.** And unlike Microtron, Jasmine couldn't be rebuilt...

Returning to Earth, the Micronauts escaped a bizarre little girl with strange powers and the insect master called **Odd John,** who nearly mutated Bug into his own creation! **Ant-Man** met the 'nauts on their own terms, as they went on to defeat **Plant Man, Computrex,** and in the MICRONAUTS ANNUAL, the **Toymaster!** But dire events were transpiring back home: in a back-up series, Tales of the Microverse, **Shaitan** was resurrected and **Slug** was overpowered by a **Karza**-possessed **Prince Argon,** only to be rescued by **Pharoid** of Egypta! And you thought your life was complicated!

Marvel had its own characters with a science-fiction bent, of course, as exemplified in the amazing MACHINE MAN! His 1980 nemeses included **Kubial Khan** of Xanadu (*not* the Gene Kelly/Olivia Newton-John flick), **Ion, Madam Menace, Baron Brimstone, the Satan Squad,** and the "Man Who Could Walk Through Walls." Fortunately he had help, from guest stars like the **Torch** and the **Thing,** and **Sasquatch, Northstar** and **Aurora** of **Alpha Flight!** And his supporting cast grew to include **Gears Garvin,** the K-Mart equivalent of **Tony Stark!**

The Kree **Captain Marvel** cavorted in the pages of MARVEL SPOTLIGHT, facing a phalanx of living shadows and a planet where time stood still. Another space sentinel, **Star-Lord,** made his color comics debut in SPOTLIGHT, retelling his origin and exploring the mysteries of a planet called Heaven. **Dragon-Lord,** a Japanese warrior whose destiny was to tame dragons, also bowed in these pages, and young **Steve Coffin** received the powers of Micronauts-spinoff **Captain Universe,** to battle the nefarious **Mister E!** Both MACHINE MAN and MARVEL SPOTLIGHT marked the return of Sturdy **Steve Ditko** to Marvel after too many years, to create heroes and adventures with that distinct Ditkoesque touch.

And speaking of heroes, next month we'll look at what Marvel's established super-types were up to in that first year of the new decade! Be here!

–Brian Nelson

MARVEL® COMICS PRICE GUIDE

No Trekkie's collection can afford to be complete without the back issues we covered this month. But what will these books be likely to run you at your local comics specialty shop? Our source for this info, as always, is **Robert Overstreet's** THE COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE #19. But remember, this is only a guide; actual prices may vary and should be lower for copies in fair or poor condition.

	CONDITION		
	Good	Fine	Mint
■ **BATTLESTAR: GALACTICA**			
11-22		.25	.50
■ **MACHINE MAN**			
13-17		.50	1.00
18 **(Alpha Flight)**	.85	2.50	5.00
■ **MARVEL COMICS SUPER SPECIAL**			
15 **(Star Trek)**		.60	1.20
15 ($2.00 price; limited run)	.70	2.00	4.00
16-17	.30	.90	1.80
■ **MARVEL SPOTLIGHT**			
4-7, 9		.30	.60
8 **(Miller art)**	.35	1.00	2.00
■ **MICRONAUTS**			
13-24		.45	.90
ANNUAL 2		.50	1.00
■ **ROM**			
2-5	.25	.75	1.50
6-13		.60	1.20
■ **SHOGUN WARRIORS**			
12-20		.25	.50
■ **STAR TREK**			
1	.30	.90	1.80
2-9		.60	1.20
■ **STAR WARS**			
31-37	.25	.75	1.50
38-42 (Empire Strikes Back)	.35	1.00	2.00

MARVEL AGE®

ROSEMARY, AND THYME

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016
Attention correspondents. All letters to be considered for publication must include your name and address though we will withhold that info on request!

Hi there! This month's slightly spicy, folk rock-inspired letter column title comes to us courtesy of little Adam Blaustein of New York, NY. Thanks, Adam! Simon and Garfunkel would be proud.

Before we tune up the ol' guitar and dive into this month's medley of mail, though, let's just take a minute to remind everyone else out there that we still need a brand new title for this column each and every month. So put down that squeezebox and send in your ideas! If we use one of them, we'll thank you right here in this space, and that sounds even better than a heapin' helpin' of chicken fried possum, now don't it?

Dear Marvel,

Va-va-voom! Who painted that deliciously scrumptious poster of the sensational She-Hulk?

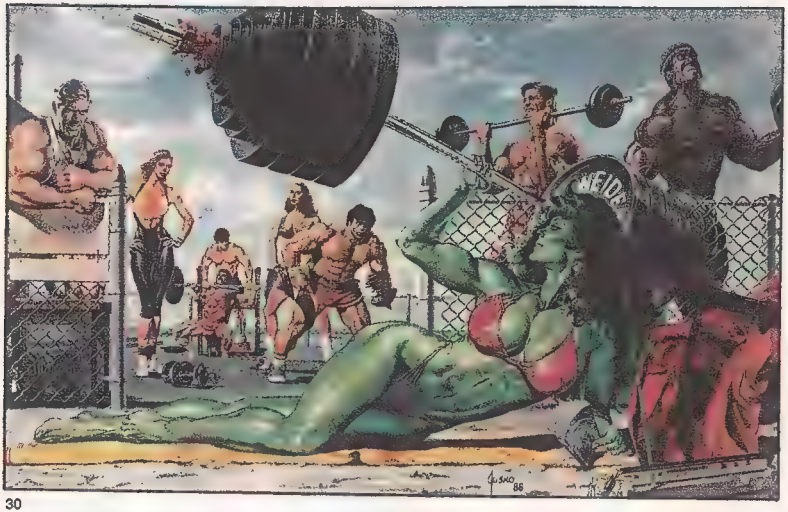
Patrick Neighly
25601 Jarl Dr.
Damascus, MD 20879

"Deliciously scrumptious"? Uh, you know, Patrick, far be it from us to tell you what to do, but we have a feeling that you're supposed to *look* at that She-Hulk poster, not *taste* it. Still, to each his own...

The poster's sunny beach scene was painted by sometimes-SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN cover artist Joe Jusko. And y'know, with Summer a thing of the past now, we may be putting three or four on the wall to keep us warm during those snowy nights.

Dear Marvel,.

I have been reading Marvel Comics since 1980 when I was four years old. I love Marvel Comics, but recently, it's disappointing me because I don't



know who is dead or alive. I have some questions for you all:

1) Are you going to make something about the original Human Torch?

2) Is Storm dead or alive?

3) Are you going to make a new SUB-MARINER comic book? Please, PLEASE, PLEASE make SUB-MARINER comic PLEASE!

Joel Clifton
2824 Ashmont Terr.
Silver Spring, MD 20906

Taking your questions in no particular order, Joel, you probably know by now that Storm is alive. But considering that she's recently changed into a little girl, it's anybody's guess what'll happen next!

As for a new series starring the original Human Torch, sorry but there are no plans for one just yet. (Of course, you can follow the adventures of the Torch and his new teammates every month in AVENGERS WEST COAST, though.) But on the other hand, we imagine you've already started haunting your local comics shop looking for the first issue of our new SUB-MARINER series! We'd make some crack about hoping you get into the swim of it soon, but we're afraid you'd hit us.

Dear Marvel,

After glancing at the page of artwork on my wall, I started to wonder what Marvel's policy for dealing with original artwork is. Having been published in a Marvel book, who keeps it? Does the artist get possession of his/her page all of the time, some of the time, or can (and does) it become the property of Marvel Comics? Since there is often another person inking the page other than the penciler, does the inker sometimes get possession of the artwork? Please enlighten me on this point.

Bill Thompson
104 Holden Rd.
Paxton, MA 01612

Consider yourself enlightened, Bill! Our hardworking art return honcho, Dwight Coye, does indeed see to it that every piece of art we use gets returned to the artist after it sees print. Naturally, that brings up your question about what we do when the penciler and inker aren't the same person, but we thought the answer would be obvious: We let them fight to the death over it.

No, no, just kidding. Actually, as a general rule, two thirds of the art go to the penciler and the other third goes to the inker.

Although, considering the prices people pay for original art these days, fighting to the death might not be such a bad idea...

Oops, there goes that yellow streak running down the back of the page again. Don't worry, though –it doesn't mean we've turned coward; it's just time for our LETTER OF THE MONTH! Yup, once again, we've burrowed through our mountain of mail and come up with a letter that we think will be of particular interest to Marveldom at large.

This time around, our Letter of the Month tells of one person's tragedy and how comics helped him through it.

To everyone at Marvel:

Recently, I lost my uncle. He was the sweetest, most caring man I knew. I was blessed to have him as relative and as a friend. My uncle, whose name is Bob, and my Aunt Shirley used to take care of me when my parents were working. I loved both of them so much.

It would have been very difficult for me to handle this moment of my life if it wasn't for Marvel. It wasn't all Marvel, of course–my parents played a major part. But how did you guys help me? You helped me by taking my mind off of my grieving and giving me wild adventures instead.

Every time I think of my Uncle Bob, a tear comes to my eye, and every time I think of Marvel now, I think of you as a dear friend. So I would just like to thank you all for being there, at least in spirit.

I would like to offer a title for the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE letter column. It is "To the Memory of Bob Motz, Long May He Live in Our Hearts."

(Name and address withheld by request)

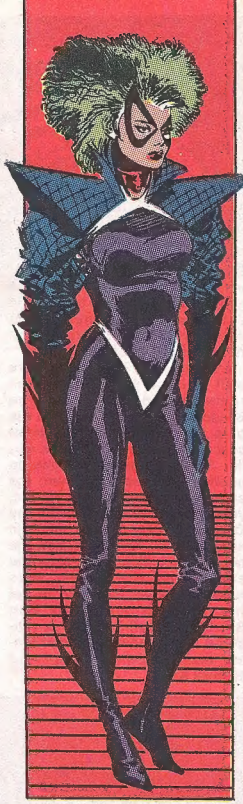
Having lost loved ones ourselves, we know how important it is to have friends who'll not only sympathize with you but also help take your mind off things sometimes. We're happy to hear that you think of us as those friends; rest assured that the feeling is mutual. We're very sorry to hear about your loss, and we're glad if our comics have made your life at all easier.

Thanks for writing, friend. Hope you'll let us share in your good times too.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I have a question and did not know who to ask, so I figured I would go straight to the source. It is about the character The Shadow.

Marvel published a graphic novel about The Shadow by Denny O'Neil, Michael Kaluta, and Russ Heath. I have also seen SHADOW comics in comics stores. I have seen back issues of THE SHADOW published



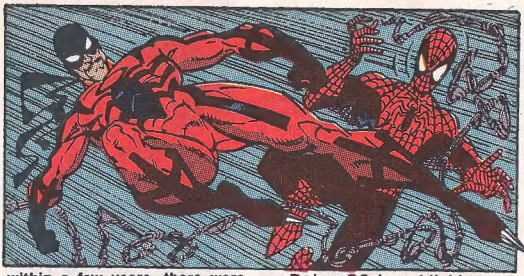
by DC Comics. And I just recently read about a new book called THE SECRET FILES OF THE SHADOW which is supposed to be done, in part, by Denny O'Neil and Michael Kaluta, except that it is being done by DC. To put it very simply, what's going on?!

Jeff Zaref
476 Ivy Avenue
Haworth, NJ 07641

What's going on, Jeff? Why that's something that only... The Shadow Knows! Hahahahahahahahahahaha

Sorry, couldn't resist.

What's really going on is that a whole lot of people in comics today admire The Shadow. You see, the character was first created for pulp magazines and radio way back in the 1930s. It didn't take long for him to catch on, and



within a few years, there were already movies, comic books, and even a syndicated newspaper comic strip all featuring the mysterious, ebon-cloaked avenger.

Even in the 1970s, there were still quite a few people who remembered and loved The Shadow, despite the fact that his pulp magazine series had been canceled almost thirty years earlier. So DC licensed the rights to publish a series about him; the series was written by the dynamic, young team of scripter Denny O'Neil and then-relatively unknown artist Michael Kaluta (in fact, the book you mention reprints several stories from that series). More recently, Marvel managed to get the rights to publish its own SHADOW Graphic Novel, as rendered by the now-old-and-crochety team of Denny O'Neil and Michael Kaluta.

Today, DC is publishing yet another series starring The Shadow and Eternity Comics is reprinting the 1940s SHADOW newspaper comic strip. And if you go to your local record store, you'll probably find an album or two featuring his old radio broadcasts.

And you think *Wolverine* gets a lot of exposure?! Who *says* the weed of crime bears bitter fruit?

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I recently opened my own comics shop, so I am asked a lot of questions about Marvel Comics. I don't think I'd be able to answer most of them if it was not for your magazine. Many of my customers like to collect stories that feature particular characters, so I often find myself checking the "Super-Villain Checklist" feature. However, I have even more customers who collect comics done by a particular artist or writer. Would MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE consider adding a "Creative Team Checklist" feature? This would help the Byrne, Romita, McFarlane, and Simonson collectors get all of the titles that they need. Thank you and keep up the good work!

Dan Barboza
Wizard's Comics
286 Maple Ave.
Barrington, RI 02806

Interesting idea, Dan. Right now, we've got so much other stuff to squeeze into each issue that it might be a little hard to find the room, but we'll certainly keep it in mind as a possibility for the future. In the meantime, you know that you can find full information on all of our creative teams in our Coming Attractions section each month, right? Of course you do. Incidentally thanks for boosting MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE in your store.

Well, it's looks like it's about time to wrap up yet another lilting letter column. But before we go, let's all step up and meet another passel of MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS, those fun-loving folks from the four corners of the Earth who are looking for new friends to exchange notes, letters, and the occasional mood ring with. Go ahead--drop one or two of them a line. After all, where else can you have this much fun for the price of a stamp? (Other than downtown Rio de Janiero on an alternate Tuesday, that is.)

MARVEL CORRESPONDENTS

If you'd like to be listed in this space yourself, simply send your name, address, age, and the titles of your three favorite Marvel Comics to the address high atop this letter column. It's quick, it's easy, and we won't even tell any evil mutants where you live.

John Merlino
255 Treadwell Ave.
Staten Island, NY 10302
Age: 16
Favorites: ALPHA FLIGHT, SPIDER-MAN, All EPIC titles

Gretchen E. Dosenbach
1055 Hadwin
Florissant, MO 63033
Age: 17
Favorites: X-MEN, CLASSIC X-MEN, D.P. 7

Steve Rickerman
5720 Dunham Rd.
Downers Grove, IL 60516
Age: 12
Favorites: POWER PACK, WEST COAST AVENGERS, X-FACTOR

Phillip Johnson
2115 Lucille Ave.
Stockton, CA 95209
Age: 14
Favorites: SILVER SURFER, SPIDER-MAN, G.I. JOE

David Patchett
4506 Spring View Dr.
Wilmington, NC 28405
Age: 13
Favorites: X-FACTOR, CAPTAIN AMERICA, AVENGERS

Jeffrey Koga
10114 Jordan Ave.
Chatsworth, CA 91311
Age: 16
Favorites: X-FACTOR, WEB OF SPIDER-MAN, MARVEL UNIVERSE HANDBOOK

Richard Vasseur
369 Manitoba St.
London, Ontario
CANADA N5W4W7
Age: 24
Favorites: X-MEN, ALPHA FLIGHT, WOLVERINE

Don Scarbrough
PO Box 418
Chandler, IN 47610
Age: 24
Favorites: X-MEN, WEST COAST AVENGERS, WOLVERINE

Chris Verbrugge
253 Forest Hill Ave. S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Age: 16
Favorites: SPIDER-MAN, AVENGERS, AKIRA

Brian Kursar
2638 W. 231st St.
Torrance, CA 90505
Age: 14
Favorites: X-MEN, X-FACTOR, POWER PACK

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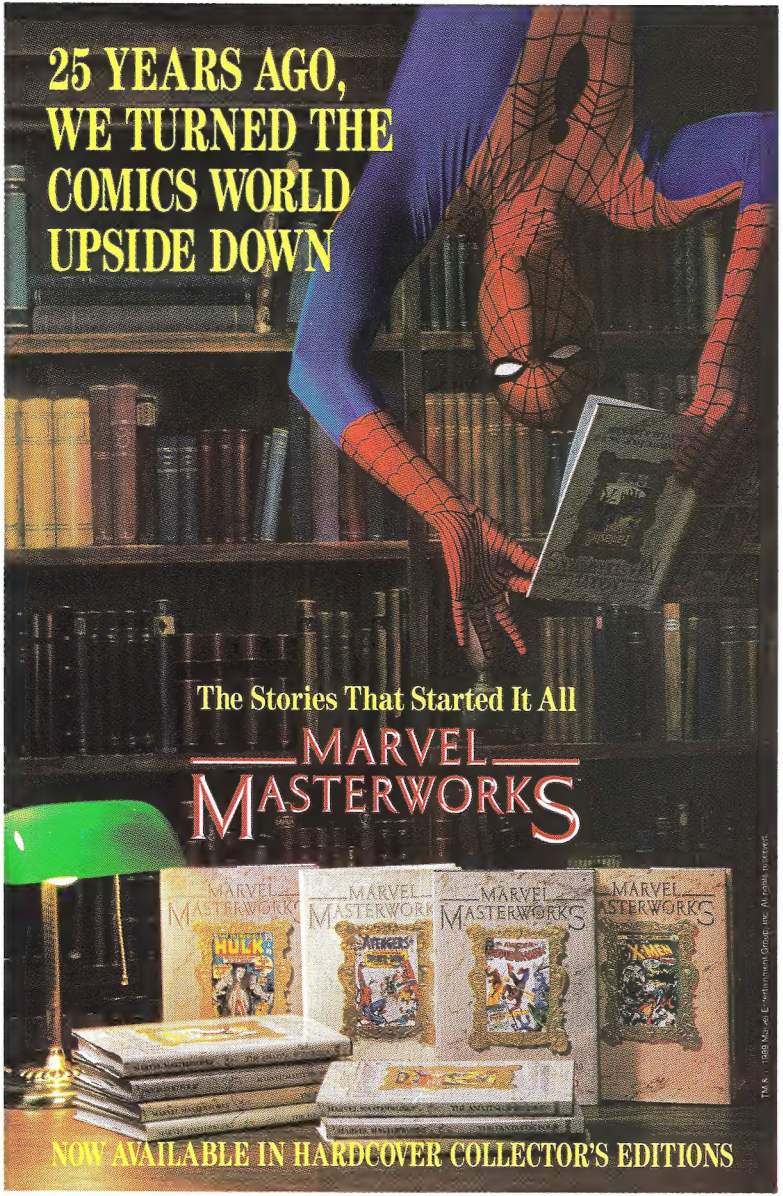
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